

Recommended Material Regarding Concerns Adults with Vulnerabilities

Signs of Neglect Concerning Adults with Vulnerabilities — Adult Protective Services

What is neglect? Neglect is the failure by a primary caregiver to support the physical, emotional and social needs of the individual dependent for care and well-being. Neglect can include failure to provide adequate food, medications or access to health care professionals.

Physical Neglect

Includes failure to attend to an individual's medical, hygienic, nutrition and dietary needs such as: dispensing medications, arranging doctors appointments, changing bandages. bathing, grooming, dressing, or failure to provide ample food to maintain health.

Emotional Neglect

Failure to meet the individual's emotional well-being such as providing adequate opportunities to socialize with friends and family and engage in meaningful activities.

Financial Neglect

Disregarding an individual's financial obligations such as: failure to pay rent, mortgage, insurances, property taxes, assessments, utility bills and other essential services.

What are some risk factors for neglect?

- Failing to provide needed supervision
- Excessive stress or burden on the caregiver
- Lack of resources and support for the caregiver
- Sudden increase in caregiver responsibilities
- Isolation of caregiver and vulnerable adult

What is financial exploitation?

Financial or material exploitation includes the misuse, mishandling or exploitation of property, possessions, or assets of adults. Examples include: using an individual's assets without consent, under false pretense, or through coercion and/or manipulation.

What are the signs of financial exploitation?

- Unusual financial activity (e.g. large bank withdrawal or use of ATMs or credit cards not normally used)
- Missing checks or missing bank statements/records
- Address or names have been changed on accounts
- Purchases made without the individual's knowledge or consent
- Newly authorized signatures on accounts or forged signatures
- Evidence that the person fell victim to a scam
- Missing belongings
- Change to a financial power of attorney
- Change of ownership of bank accounts or the deed to a physical property such as a home

What are some risk factors for financial exploitation?

- Excessive spending or financial donations
- No oversight of finances
- Unaware of technology or modern payment methods
- Cognitive impairment or dementia
- Social isolation

What is self-neglect?

Self-neglect involves older adults or adults with disabilities who cannot meet their own essential physical, psychological or social needs, which threatens their health, safety and well-being. Examples include: failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, and health care for one's own needs.

What are the signs of self-neglect?

- Not following up with health care provider
- Not taking medication as needed
- Doesn't have food, inadequate nutrition
- Lives in unsafe housing conditions such as lack of heat, electricity or running water
- Has poor personal hygiene
- Lacks/won't allow needed care

What are some risk factors for self-neglect?

- Recent widow or loss of loved one
- Worsening medical problems or a physical disability
- Lack of outside contact, isolated from friends and family
- Lack of a caregiver
- Cognitive impairment, dementia

What is physical or sexual abuse?

Physical abuse may include slapping, hitting, beating, bruising or causing someone physical pain, injury or suffering. This also could include confining an adult against his/her will, such as locking someone in a room or using restraints. Sexual Abuse includes physical force, threats, or coercion to facilitate non-consensual touching, fondling, intercourse or other sexual activities. This is particularly true with vulnerable adults who are unable to give consent or comprehend the nature of these actions.

What are the signs of physical or sexual abuse?

- Bruising
- Unexplained bruising
- Strangulation
- Fractures
- Burns
- Bed sores
- Over or under medicating
- Not wearing appropriate clothing for the weather (such as heavy clothing when hot)
- Controlling access to or the movements of an individual

What are some risk factors?*

- Family crisis or family members are suffering from stress
- Domestic issues causing violence or conflict in the home
- Depression, unusual fears or sudden loss of self-confidence
- Noticeable withdrawal and lack of socialization
- Loneliness and isolation

*The presence of warning signs doesn't necessarily mean that the adult is being abused.