



# Red Flags of Elder Abuse



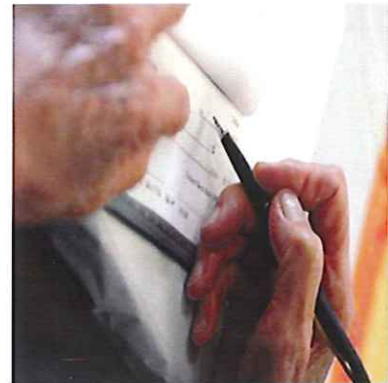
## → Neglect

- Lack of basic hygiene, adequate food, or clean and appropriate clothing
- Lack of medical aids (glasses, walker, dentures, hearing aid, medications)
- Person with dementia left unsupervised
- Person confined to bed is left without care
- Home cluttered, filthy, in disrepair, or having fire and safety hazards
- Home without adequate facilities (stove, refrigerator, heat, cooling, working plumbing, and electricity)
- Untreated pressure “bed” sores (pressure ulcers)



## → Financial Abuse/Exploitation

- Lack of amenities victim could afford
- Vulnerable elder/adult “voluntarily” giving uncharacteristically excessive financial reimbursement/gifts for needed care and companionship
- Caregiver has control of elder’s money but is failing to provide for elder’s needs
- Vulnerable elder/adult has signed property transfers (Power of Attorney, new will, etc.) but is unable to comprehend the transaction or what it means

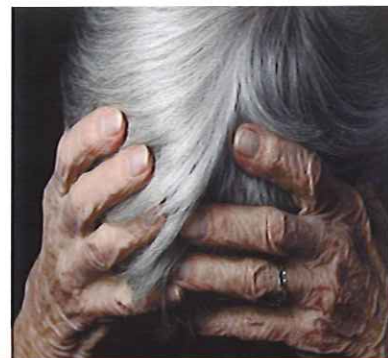


## → Psychological/Emotional Abuse

- Unexplained or uncharacteristic changes in behavior, such as withdrawal from normal activities or unexplained changes in alertness
- Caregiver isolates elder (doesn’t let anyone into the home or speak to the elder)
- Caregiver is verbally aggressive or demeaning, controlling, overly concerned about spending money or uncaring

## → Physical/Sexual Abuse

- Inadequately explained fractures, bruises, welts, cuts, sores, or burns
- Unexplained sexually transmitted diseases



**If you or someone you know is in a life threatening situation or immediate danger, call 911 or 1-800-752-6200.**

**Do you want to make a difference? Call 859-277-9215 for information about the Bluegrass Elder Abuse Prevention Council.**



### Responding to Abuse and Neglect of Nursing Home Residents

- ★ The most important thing you can do when someone tells you they have been abused or neglected is to **believe them.**
- ★ Telling the resident that you are there to listen and give support whenever he/she is ready to talk, but do not push. Give the resident permission to tell by saying things like "I think you must have been hurt, and it wasn't your fault. I want to understand what happened, so I can help you feel safe. Will you tell me what happened?"
- ★ Controlling *your* emotions. If you show anger, sadness or fear then the victim may shut down and stop talking about the incident for fear of causing you harm or stress.
- ★ Letting the resident know that he/she did the right things during the abuse or neglect incident(s). Do not question or judge what he/she did to survive. Survival is evidence that he/she handled the situation correctly. Praise the resident for telling you what happened.
- ★ Reassuring the resident that you still love and care for him/her.
- ★ Be prepared. You may see the resident's hurt emotions expressed through his/her behavior.
- ★ Get medical attention for a resident who may have been the victim of abuse or neglect. Residents may also need counseling or help dealing with emotions that follow abuse and neglect.

### **Kentucky's Mandatory Reporting Laws**

Kentucky's mandatory reporting laws require that abuse, neglect, and exploitation be reported when the victim is a child (under 18), the spouse of the offender, and an otherwise vulnerable adult. KRS 209.020. KRS 209.030. KRS 620.630

Even if you are told that the matter has already been reported, applaud that action and state that you too must call in a report. As a Kentuckian it is your duty to report. Duplicate calls to the Department for Community Based Services' Adult Protective Services will not hurt anyone and may ensure that the resident get the help needed.

### **The Affordable Care Act of 2010's Elder Justice Requirements**

Each LTC facility that receives Federal funds and each employee, manager, agent, contractor, owner, and operator has an obligation by law to report to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) AND AT LEAST ONE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENTITY **any reasonable suspicion of a crime against a resident.** If the events that cause the reasonable suspicion result in serious bodily injury, the **report must be made immediately** after forming the suspicion (but NOT later than 2 hours after forming the suspicion). If serious bodily injury is not suspected, the report must be made not later than 24 hours after forming the suspicion. Individuals as well as LTC facilities are subject to civil money penalty for failure to meet reporting obligations.

### Who to call

- The statewide abuse hotline at **1-800-752-6200** or your local Department for Community Based Services Adult Protection office.
- Local law enforcement or State Police. Call 911 if a resident is in immediate danger.
- The Office of Inspector General (OIG): Lexington (859) 246-2301 or London(606) 330-2030 offices

Please feel free to call the long term care ombudsman who visits residents at your facility. The ombudsman's phone number should be easily found on a poster hanging in the nursing home or you may call the Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency of the Bluegrass at 1-877-787-0077. If in doubt, it is always better to call and talk with a trained professional about what has come to your attention. Persons acting upon reasonable cause in the reporting of known or suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation are immune from civil and criminal liability. This immunity exists with respect to the reporting, the investigation, and any judicial proceedings, resulting from the report. The source of a report of abuse, neglect or exploitation is kept confidential unless it is ordered released by a court according to KRS 209.140. Also, the facility may not retaliate against an individual who lawfully reports a reasonable suspicion of a crime under section 1150B of the Social Security Act.