Example Scenarios

MISTREATMENT BY A CAREGIVER

Liz is a 78-year-old widow with dementia. Liz's daughter Joanne cares for her. Although Joanne tells Liz not to cook, she always tries to anyway and leaves the stove on. After many such incidents, Joanne becomes furious and yells at Liz, threatening to put her in a nursing home.

THE LATEST SCAM

Edna cares for her husband Joe who has dementia. Edna overhears Joe giving out his social security number over the phone. Edna asks Joe about the call and makes inquiries. Edna finds out that the call he received was a scam and reports the incident to her local authorities.

CAREGIVER SEEKING HELP

Steve cares for his wife Martha who has dementia. Steve feels that each day is becoming more difficult for him as her condition gets worse. He is stressed and worried about letting out his frustration on his wife. Steve calls the Alzheimer's Association to see if he can find a local support group so that he can talk to other caregivers about his feelings.

Who to Contact for More Information:

alzheimer's association

Alzheimer's Association

Support for all persons affected by Alzheimer's and other dementias.

24/7 HELPLINE: 800-272-3900

www.alz.org

National Center on Elder Abuse

Research, training, and resources on elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

NCEA National Center on Elder Abuse

855-500-3537
www.ncea.aoa.gov

Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving

Advocacy, education, research, and services for family and professional caregivers.

Rosalynn Carter INSTITUTE FOR CAREGIVING

229-928-1234
www.rosalynncarter.org

Eldercare Locator

Referrals to services for older adults and their families.

eldercare locator

800-677-1116
www.eldercare.gov

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If you care for someone with dementia...

You are their advocate!

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Caregiving is hard work!

Caregiving can be overwhelming. It involves not only strenuous physical tasks but also managing financial matters, organizing care, and so much more. Caring for someone with dementia can include particular challenges such as:

- *Making sense of an unclear diagnosis*
- *Managing multiple medications*
- *Maintaining patience*
- *Feeling pressure to be "on watch" 24 hours a day*
- *Losing a partnership*
- *Lack of personal time, privacy or family support*
- *Managing sleep problems*

If you are in this situation, you may be feeling frustrated, isolated, stressed, overwhelmed, or all of the above. These feelings are perfectly normal! But when ignored, they can be harmful to both yourself and your loved one.

What is Elder Mistreatment?

Elder abuse refers to intentional or neglectful acts by a caregiver or "trusted" individual that can lead to harm of a vulnerable elder.

TYPES OF ABUSE

- *Physical*
- *Verbal/Psychological*
- *Financial*
- *Neglect/Isolation*
- *Sexual*

DEMENTIA AND ELDER ABUSE

Research indicates that older adults with dementia are particularly vulnerable to abuse.

A SLIPPERY SLOPE

In many situations, abuse can happen subtly and escalate over time. One outburst can lead to multiple outbursts or verbal abuse.

NOT JUST IN NURSING HOMES

The majority of elder abuse reported to Adult Protective Services occurs in the home. Sadly, elder abuse is often committed by family members.

How Can You Protect and Advocate for Your Loved One?

1) Take care of yourself.

- Take breaks when you can. Call a loved one or sit quietly outside.
- Join a support group in your area.
- Know when you've reached your limit.

2) Ask for help.

- Seek help from family members.
- Make use of support services such as respite care, home delivered meals, adult day care, and case management.
- Hire a personal care attendant or homemaker.

3) Learn to respond appropriately to difficult behaviors.

- Observe your loved one's behaviors and discuss problems with a professional.
- Learn more about dementia and ways to respond to difficult behaviors.

4) Identify "stress triggers".

- Know the aspects of caregiving that are particularly stressful.

5) Inform your family.

- Inform your family members about elder abuse so they can be aware.

6) Know the signs and speak up!

- If you suspect that someone is being abused or exploited, report your suspicions to your local Adult Protective Services Agency.