

An Introduction to Elder Abuse for Professionals: **Abandonment**



Understanding Abandonment

Learning Objectives

At the end of this presentation, you will be able to:

- Define and describe abandonment
- Identify indicators of abandonment
- Identify strategies to respond to possible abandonment situations

Case Example

- Sol is a 67-year-old man paralyzed on one side of his body from a stroke.
- He hired Fred to live in his home and provide personal care. Fred provided good care until the two argued over giving Fred a raise.
- When Sol refused, Fred left him in bed, placed his wheelchair in another room, destroyed the telephone and left.
- Three days later Sol's daughter found her father lying in his own waste, dehydrated, and delirious.

Case Example (cont.)

- Park rangers patrolling a mountain road area found 69 year old Angelica wandering on a road.
- Snow ploughs had cleared the road just 2 days earlier.
- Angelica was cold and hungry and did not know her name, where she lived, or who cared for her.

Abandonment

The desertion of an older adult by an individual who has assumed responsibility for providing care for the adult, or by a person with physical custody of the adult

(National Center on Elder Abuse)



Consider adding state, tribal, or territorial statutes relating to abandonment (including statutes and case law describing what makes someone a caregiver in this jurisdiction) here. These may be found in criminal law, protective services, or other, statutes.

Consider discussing reporting laws in the Response Section (slide 15).

Indicators: Potential Victim

- An older adult who is confused or has dementia who has been left alone for days.
- An older adult who is unable to provide basic information about themselves is found wandering.
- An older adult is left at a mall or hospital emergency department in a strange community.

Indicators: Potential Abuser

- Leaving a person who is unable to provide information about themselves
 - At a hospital
 - At a mall, other location open to the public, or on a road

Response to Abandonment

Victim Safety

All responses and interventions must consider and prioritize victim safety.

What You Can Do

- **Recognize the signs of Abandonment**
- **Ask**
- **Report or refer**

If The Older Adult Can Answer Questions, Consider Asking:

- Name? Where do you live?
- Do you know where you are? How did you get here?
- Do you want to be here?
- Do you have a caregiver? Who? When did you last see the caregiver? What is the last thing the caregiver said to you?
- What does your caregiver do for you?
- Do you know how to contact the caregiver
- Do you know how to return home?

Report - Refer

REPORT

- 911 or law enforcement (life threatening or possible crime)
- Adult protective services
- Licensing board (if abuse occurs in a facility)

REFER

- Aging network agency
- Ombudsman (if abuse is in a facility)



Consider inserting slides
describing the local jurisdiction's
elder abuse/
vulnerable adult reporting law

Consider adding local resources and programs. (See “*A Guide to Planning Your Elder Abuse Presentation*” at ***** for more information.)

Additional Resources

- [National Center on Elder Abuse \(NCEA\)](#)
- [National Adult Protective Services Resource Center \(NAPSRC\)](#)

For more information, visit us!

ncea.aoa.gov

Also on Facebook, Twitter,
YouTube

centeronelderabuse.org

Also on Facebook, YouTube



For additional resources, visit www.ncea.aoa.gov



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