

Hartman's
In-Service Education SourceBook Series



Preventing Abuse & Neglect

A Guide for Caregivers



Preventing

ABUSE & NEGLECT

A Guide for Caregivers

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NOTICE TO THE READER

Though the guidelines contained in this text are based on consultations with health care professionals, they should not be considered absolute recommendations. The instructor and readers should follow employer, local, state, and federal guidelines concerning health care practices. These guidelines change, and it is the reader's responsibility to be aware of these changes and of the policies and procedures of her or his health care facility/agency.

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Table of Contents

FYI	5
Introduction and Assessment	7
Handout Intro-1 Assessment A (pg. 8)	
Handout Intro-2 Assessment A Answer Key (pg. 9)	
Handout Intro-3 Key Terms (pg. 10)	
Handout Intro-4 Note-Taking Worksheet (pg. 11)	
Learning Objective 1: Define abuse and neglect	15
Transparency 1-1 Types of Abuse and Neglect (pg. 18)	
Handout 1-1 Name the Abuse or Neglect (pg. 19)	
Learning Objective 2: Describe signs of abuse and neglect	21
Handout 2-1 Signs of Abuse and Neglect (pg. 23)	
Transparency 2-1 Suspicious Injuries (pg. 24)	
Transparency 2-2 Signs of Abuse (pg. 25)	
Transparency 2-3 Signs of Neglect (pg. 26)	
Learning Objective 3: Describe persons who are most vulnerable to abuse or neglect by caregivers	27
Handout 3-1 Who is Vulnerable to Abuse or Neglect? (pg. 28)	
Transparency 3-1 Who is Vulnerable to Abuse or Neglect? (pg. 29)	
Learning Objective 4: Identify factors that contribute to increased stress among caregivers	30
Transparency 4-1 Stressful Situations (pg. 33)	
Transparency 4-2 Negative Attitudes (pg. 34)	
Transparency 4-3 Dealing With Stress (pg. 35)	
Transparency 4-4 Helping Family Members With Stress (pg. 36)	
Handout 4-1 Discussion Time (pg. 37)	
Learning Objective 5: Describe the proper response of health caregivers to suspected abuse and neglect	38
Transparency 5-1 Your Responsibilities (pg. 40)	
Learning Objective 6: List ways that caregivers can help prevent or stop abuse and neglect	41
Transparency 6-1 Preventing Abuse and Neglect (pg. 42)	

Closing and Assessment	43
Handout Closing-1 Assessment B (pg. 45)	
Handout Closing-2 Assessment B Answer Key (pg. 48)	
References	49
In-Service Evaluation Form	50
Certificate of Completion	51
Record Keeping Form	52
For More Information	53

This in-service covers abuse and neglect in the health care setting. The extent of adult abuse in this country is shocking. Precisely how many adults are unable to provide for their own protection, and are victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation by their caregivers or family, is subject to question. There is no doubt, however, that the incidence of adult abuse far exceeds the number of reported cases. Though abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older persons or disabled adults is only slightly less widespread than child abuse, it is far less likely to be reported.

Estimates of physical abuse of adults over 65 vary widely, from four percent to as high as twenty-five percent. Translated into human terms, these statistics suggest that from *one to six million* adults are abused each year. (Source: Communication on Aging, 1990.) More than half of these adults suffer psychological abuse as well, including verbal assault, threats, fear, or isolation. Psychological abuse is generally considered to be the most common of all forms of adult abuse.

Nursing assistants and home health aides should be conscious of their own behavior when caring for others. Many things can affect caregivers and lead to abuse or neglect of the people in their care, including stress, difficult behaviors, improper training, understaffing, and personal or cultural attitudes about violence. This in-service should allow your participants to explore those factors and understand how they can

affect the care they give to others. During this in-service be certain your participants clearly understand their responsibilities when dealing with suspected abuse or neglect.

NOTE: If at all possible, this in-service should be conducted in a "safe" environment so that your participants feel free to openly discuss their concerns about abuse and neglect.

Please note that limited permission is granted to photocopy the handouts for use at the site originally purchasing this in-service. Photocopying other parts of this in-service, including the lesson plan, is expressly prohibited.

To use the handouts, photocopy the number needed for your group. Consider using different colors of paper to organize the different handouts or to make some stand out.

Convert transparency masters to acetates for use with an overhead projector. You can do this by purchasing transparency film at an office supply store and photocopying the transparency masters onto the acetates, or you can have a copy company do it for you. If overhead projection is not convenient for your presentation area, you may wish to copy the information from the transparency masters onto a chalkboard or flip chart.

We hope you find this in-service helpful. And, as always, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

Introduction and Assessment

Estimated Time: 10-15 minutes

Tools: Handout Intro-1 Assessment A
Handout Intro-2 Assessment A Answer Key
Handout Intro-3 Key Terms
Handout Intro-4 Note-Taking Worksheet

Learning Activity: **Assessment**

NOTE: Before teaching this in-service, the instructor must find out whether your state requires health care workers to report suspected abuse and neglect. On the answer key, question #1, write true or false, depending on your state's requirements.

**Distribute
Handout Intro-1
Assessment A**

Ask the participants to complete the assessment. If you decide to use this assessment as a post-test at the end of the in-service, withhold the answers for now. Use the assessment to lead into a discussion of domestic violence.

**Distribute
Handout Intro-3
Key Terms**

Go over the key terms as necessary.

**Distribute
Handout Intro-4
Note-Taking
Worksheet**

Encourage participants to take notes during the lecture, as this will help them learn and remember the information.

Assessment A

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write (T) True or (F) False for each of the following statements.

1. ___ My state requires health care workers to report suspected abuse on the job.
2. ___ Health care workers should report suspected abuse, whether their states require them to or not.
3. ___ The words "passive neglect" mean not caring for another person on purpose.
4. ___ Over 1,000,000 elderly adults are abused and exploited every year.
5. ___ Caregivers who abuse the people in their care cannot change the way they behave.
6. ___ There is no point in reporting suspicions of abuse or neglect to the supervisor, because it costs too much and it doesn't do any good.
7. ___ The people most vulnerable to adult abuse and neglect are the elderly, mentally and physically ill, and developmentally disabled.
8. ___ Screaming and yelling are kinds of abuse.
9. ___ To help prevent abuse or neglect, the elderly should maintain friendships, invite guests over often, and keep control of their own finances.
10. ___ Caregivers who are under a lot of stress are less likely to abuse or neglect the persons in their care.

Assessment A Answer Key

1. _____
2. **True.**
3. **False.** "Passive neglect" means not caring for another person because you do not know how to care for this person. "Active neglect" means purposely not caring for another person.
4. **True.** And the number keeps rising.
5. **False.** Caregivers can learn how to change their attitudes and the way they deal with the people in their care.
6. **False.** There is no way the health care system can solve the problems of abuse and neglect if no one reports it.
7. **True.**
8. **True.**
9. **True.** All of these actions can help the elderly remain as independent as possible.
10. **False.** Stress plays a big part in abuse and neglect. Caregivers who are under a lot of stress are many times unable to cope with their emotions very well, and this can lead to abuse and neglect.

Key Terms

Abuse: Purposely causing physical, mental, or emotional pain or injury to someone in your care.

Active Neglect: Purposely harming a person physically, mentally, or emotionally by failing to provide needed care. Examples include deliberately leaving a bedridden person alone for lengthy periods, ignoring the person, or willfully denying the person food, medication, dentures, or eyeglasses.

Confidentiality: Keeping information about the persons in your care and their families only among people who are directly involved with their care.

Financial Abuse: Stealing, exploiting, or improperly using the money, property, or other assets of another person.

Neglect: Harming the person in your care either physically, mentally, or emotionally by failing to provide needed care.

Passive Neglect: Unintentionally harming a person physically, mentally, or emotionally by failing to provide needed care. Caregiver may not know how to properly care for the person, or may not understand the person's needs.

Physical Abuse: Physically harming a person through such actions as slapping, bruising, cutting, burning, physically restraining, pushing, shoving, or even rough handling.

Psychological Abuse: Emotionally harming a person by demeaning, frightening, humiliating, intimidating, isolating, insulting, treating him or her as a child, or by using verbal aggression.

Self-abuse or Neglect: Any of the activities mentioned above committed by the person himself.

Sexual Abuse: Sexually harming a person by molesting or raping.

Stocking Burns: Burns created when a part of the body is held in scalding water.