



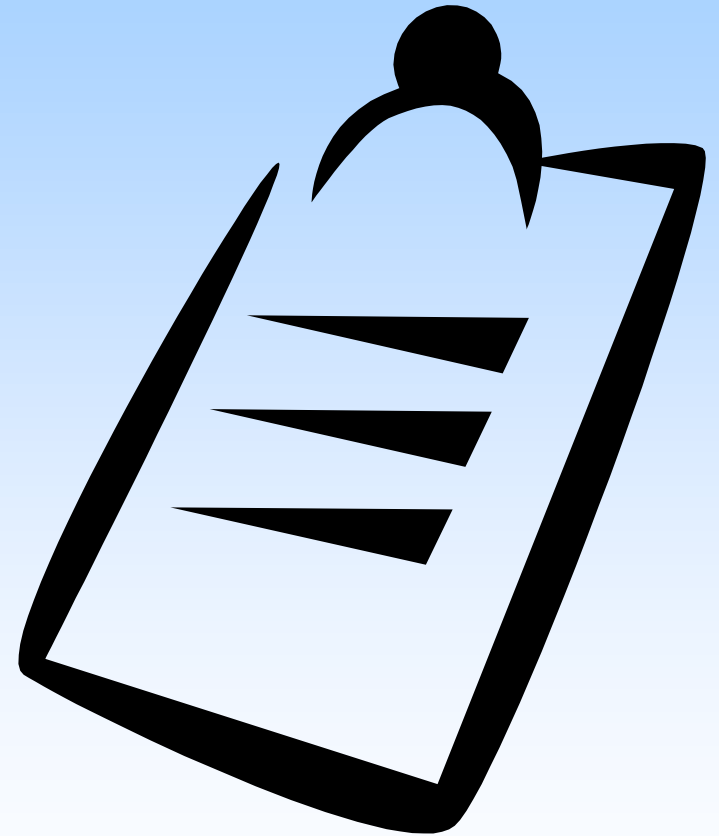
Franklin County Office on Aging Adult Protective Services

Elder Abuse *The Silent Epidemic*



Objectives

- ✓ Identify the basics of elder abuse.
- ✓ Discuss the role of Adult Protective Services (APS).
- ✓ Review ethical and practice guidelines for addressing elder abuse.





What do we know?

- It is estimated that one to two million older Americans suffer from some form of elder abuse annually.
- A National Center on Elder Abuse study found that for every one report of elder abuse, five are unreported.
- The risk of abuse is increased by social isolation, physical and mental impairments and a history of domestic violence.



What is APS?

Adult Protective Services is intended to assist vulnerable older adults who are in danger of harm, unable to protect themselves from abuse, neglect and exploitation.



Who does APS serve?

- Vulnerable adults age 60 years and older
- Franklin County residents
- Individuals that reside in the community
- Alleged victim of maltreatment



Goals

- Prevent, remedy or reduce situations causing endangerment to the adult
- Maximize the adult's independence and self-direction
- Prevent unnecessary institutionalization by selecting the least restrictive alternative



Services Available

- Investigations/Assessments of maltreatment
- Linkage with appropriate agencies for services
- Guardianships
- Conservatorships
- Protective Orders



Legal Authority

- The authorizing statute for Adult Protective Services in Ohio [ORC 5101.60] passed in 1981.
- Funding provided by the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services

Abuse





Abuse

The infliction upon an adult by him/herself or others of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation or cruel punishment with resulting physical harm, pain or mental anguish.

Types: emotional, physical, psychological, sexual and verbal



Abuse Indicators

- Adult expresses fear or reports abuse
- Multiple or severe bruises, cuts/burns, broken bones, sprains, wounds
- Restraint or confinement



Abuse Indicators

- Injuries at several stages
- Yelling or belittling an older adult
- Being extremely withdrawn or non-communicative
- Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections, vaginal/anal bleeding





Neglect

The failure of an adult or caretaker to provide goods or services necessary to avoid physical harm, mental anguish or mental illness.

Types: abandonment, neglect, self-neglect

Neglect





Neglect Indicators

- Older adult report of neglect
- High risk behaviors (i.e. wandering, smoking on home oxygen, etc.)
- Poor personal hygiene and inability to care for self





Neglect Indicators

- Untreated medical conditions (i.e. bedsores, dehydration, malnutrition)
- Abandonment of an older adult at a hospital or other public location





Exploitation

The unlawful or improper act of an individual using an adult and his/her resources for monetary or personal benefit, profit or gain.

Types – Financial and material exploitation

Exploitation





Exploitation Indicators

- Changes in banking practices (i.e. – additional names on account)
- Abrupt changes in a will or other financial papers
- Checks signed by another person without legal authority



Exploitation Indicators

- Purchase of expensive goods, supplies or services not needed or wanted
- Unpaid utilities, rent/mortgage or unfilled prescriptions when another party responsible for payment

Legal Intervention





APS Protective Orders

- Unique to APS staff
- Temporary Restraining Order to prevent interference of an investigation
- Court Ordered Protective Services
- Temporary Restraining Order to prevent interference with the provision of protective services



Incapacity

“Incapacitated person” means a person who is impaired for any reason to the extent that he lacks sufficient understanding or capacity to make and carry out reasonable decisions concerning his persons or resources, with or without the assistance of a caretaker.

Ohio Revised Code 5101.60



Guardianship

- A court ordered relationship established by the Probate Court.
- A guardian acts on behalf of client for personal needs and /or money management.
- Guardianship may be limited in power and duration.
- The client must be adjudicated incompetent by the Probate Court.



Incompetency

“Incompetent” means any person who is so mentally impaired ... that the person is incapable of taking proper care of the person’s self or property or fails to provide for the person’s family or other persons for whom the person is charged by law to provide or any person confined to a correctional institution within this state.

Ohio Revised Code 2111.01



Conservatorship

- A voluntary court supervised relationship established by the Probate Court.
- A conservator acts on behalf of the client for personal needs and/or money management.
- The client is physically infirm, yet mentally competent.

Reporting & Investigations





Mandated Reporting

- Health Professionals – nurses, physicians, home health providers, EMS
- Social Services – social workers, counselors, mental health professionals
- Legal Professionals – attorneys
- Law Enforcement – police, sheriff
- Clergy

Ohio Revised Code 5101.61



Confidentiality

- Referral source remains confidential
- Investigation outcome remains confidential to outside sources
- Exempt from public records



Reporting to APS

- Demographic information
- Age – DOB or approximate age
- Address – client's whereabouts
- Nature of maltreatment
- Physical and mental impairments
- Formal and informal supports



Investigative Process

- Three business days to initiate
 - 24 hours for emergencies
- Unannounced home visits in pairs
- 30 days to complete an investigation



Balancing Act

- Managing multiple interests
- Freedom vs. Safety
- Client Rights vs. Protection
- Private Interest vs. Public Interest



Contact Us

Franklin County Office on Aging Adult Protective Services

280 E Broad St, 3rd Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

(614) 525-4348

www.officeonaging.org

referrals.officeonaging.org