



FORMS OF ELDER ABUSE

Physical Abuse

When somebody hits an older adult or handles the person roughly, even if there is no injury. Giving a person too much or too little medication, or physically restraining a person, are also forms of physical abuse.

Sexual Abuse

When somebody forces an older adult to engage in sexual activity. This may include verbal or suggestive behaviour, not respecting personal privacy, sexual touching, or sex without the person's consent.

Emotional abuse

When somebody threatens, insults, intimidates, or humiliates an older adult, treats the person like a child, or does not allow them to see their family and friends. Emotional abuse can devastate a person's sense of identity, dignity, or self-worth.

Financial abuse

When somebody tricks, threatens, or persuades older adults out of their money, property, or possessions. Misusing a power of attorney is a common form of financial abuse.

Violation of rights and freedoms

When somebody interferes with an older adult's ability to make choices, especially when those choices are protected under the law. Examples include interfering with spiritual practices or traditions; withholding mail or information; denying privacy; preventing visitors; dictating how someone else can spend their own money; or keeping someone in an institution without a legitimate reason.

Neglect

When somebody fails to provide the necessities of life, such as food, clothing, a safe shelter, medical attention, personal care, and necessary supervision. Neglect may be intentional or unintentional. Sometimes the people providing care do not have the necessary knowledge, experience, or ability.

Systemic abuse

Systemic abuse (also called institutional abuse) refers to rules, regulations, policies, or social practices that harm or discriminate against older adults. Systemic abuse includes rules that are developed for an apparently neutral purpose, but that hurt the person. Examples include using physical restraints as an easy way to prevent falls; or diapering a person instead of helping them to the washroom, simply to save time or effort. Sometimes staff shortages can lead to systemic neglect.