

“Taking Action Against Elder Abuse”

A Service Provider Referral Resource



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“Taking Action Against Elder Abuse”

Elder Abuse is any action or inaction that jeopardizes the health or well-being of any older adult. It can take several forms including financial, physical, emotional, spiritual, sexual, medication and neglect. Elder Abuse can affect any older adult, regardless of socio-economic background, health status or cultural heritage. Elder Abuse involves power and control over another, often through a pattern of behavior over time, based on relationships of trust.

Rural seniors face the potential for additional vulnerabilities due to isolation and limited access to resources and supports. Elder Abuse is a serious social and public health issue.

Elder Abuse can be severe, complex and is almost always hidden. Elder abuse can take place anywhere a senior lives, most often elder abuse happens in the home with family members, close friends or caregivers being the perpetrators. Studies show certain factors are related to abuse, and that the existence of more than one of these factors places a senior at higher risk of experiencing elder abuse.

Risk Factors:

- History of abuse between family members
- Level of dependency on other family members
- Caregiver stress/Inability to cope with long-term care giving
- Isolation
- Lack of knowledge about the degree of care and needs of an older person
- Living arrangements
- Family conflict
- Psychological problems
- Greed
- Ageism & lack of knowledge about the aging process
- Alcohol or drug use

Indicators for different types of elder abuse may differ based on a victim’s characteristics, such as:

- Age
- Cognitive ability
- Gender
- Past experiences
- Community support
- Family structure

Call 911 if it is an emergency

Do not hesitate to call the police if you suspect a crime has been committed or that someone is in danger.

If there is no immediate danger, call your local police to discuss your concerns with a police officer.

Many seniors are reluctant to report abuse. Some reasons may include, love for the abuser, hope for change, fear of institutionalization, fear of losing a caregiver, inability to report, hopelessness, shame, guilt, fear of the abuser, or they are unaware of resources available to them. Assistance should not be forced, even if it seems to be in the best interest of the senior. The wishes of the senior who may be experiencing abuse must be respected. This Service Provider Referral Resource is intended to aid service providers in identifying situations where abuse may be occurring and can provide some guidance to assist seniors in these situations.

If a senior is in immediate danger, contact the RCMP or dial 911.

If you suspect abuse try to:

- Ask the senior questions, when you and the senior are alone in a safe location.
- Speak to the senior about your concerns.
- Be sensitive to the senior's culture, language, religion and comfort level in disclosure.
- Let the senior know that he/she is invited to share information, and that it will be kept confidential but if the information reveals immediate danger or a crime, the appropriate authorities will need to be contacted.
- Ask the senior about his or her concerns, such as fear of retaliation, withdrawal of support and confidentiality.
- Seek support or consultation from other professionals.

Questions that can be used to screen for abuse:

- Would you like to share anything with me?
- Is something or someone making you feel unsafe?
- Is there someone available to assist you when help is needed?
- Has anyone asked you to sign documents that you don't want to sign or don't understand?
- Who makes decisions about your life, such as how or where you live?
- Is anyone hurting you or are you afraid?

What you can do:

Education

Inform the senior of services specific to his/her needs. Make a **responsible referral** (help the senior connect with community resources). Encourage the senior to discuss their situation/concerns with trusted members of their family.

Safety Plan

For many reasons some people will choose to remain in abusive relationships or situations. A safety plan can be a key part in helping to keep the victim safe. Advise the senior to keep a bag in a safe place. It should contain items that will be needed if he/she has to leave home quickly, such as ID, medication, changes of clothes, cash, and important documents. Help the senior develop a plan that includes where he/she can go in case of an emergency, such as trusted family and friends. Safety plans vary depending on the type and severity of abuse. **Support the senior and let him or her know that everyone deserves to live safe and free of abuse.**

FORMS OF ELDER ABUSE

Financial Abuse

Financial abuse is the most common form of elder abuse in Canada. Financial abuse can happen at any time, but it will often start after a health crisis or after the death of a spouse, partner or close friend. People who are alone, lonely or in poor health are more vulnerable. Financial abuse is the illegal or unauthorized use of an older person's money or property and includes pressuring someone for their money or property. Like most people who exploit or abuse others, elder abusers frequently develop close relationships to their victims and use these trusting friendships to gain access to the victim's assets. Common abusers include family, friends, neighbours and caregivers.

Emotional Abuse

Psychological abuse of seniors includes any verbal or non-verbal acts that undermine the senior's sense of dignity or self-worth and threatens their psychological well-being. Emotional elder abuse is almost always accompanied by another form of abuse, such as physical abuse. Emotional abuse of the elderly can range from a simple verbal insult to an extreme form of verbal punishment.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse of a senior involves the act of physical violence or force against an elder that results in physical impairment, physical pain, injury or bodily harm to the individual. This may involve assault, battery, hitting, punching, shoving, or using restraints inappropriately to keep the individual confined.

Sexual Abuse

Elder sexual abuse is the initiation of physical or sexual contact with an elderly person, when that contact is nonconsensual or unwanted. This abuse also includes making contact with an elderly person who is confused or unable to give consent. Whether or not the contact is significant or minor, if it is sexual in nature and nonconsensual, it is sexual abuse.

Medication Abuse

Medication abuse is the intentional or unintentional misuse of medications and prescriptions, such as withholding or providing doses that cause bodily harm, sedation or other adverse effects.

Neglect

Neglect includes the intentional or unintentional failure to provide for the basic needs, necessities and care of an older adult.

FORMS OF ABUSE - FINANCIAL ABUSE

Financial abuse is the illegal or unauthorized use of a person's money or property. It includes pressuring someone for money or property.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS

- The victim may be confused about their own finances
- Standard of living not in keeping with income or assets
- Sudden or unexplained difficulty in paying bills
- Theft of Property. Abusers sometimes steal a senior's property, buying an item from the senior at a price far below the item's market value, or "borrowing" something and never returning it
- Unusual or increased activity in the senior's bank account
- Forged signatures on financial documents, pension cheques or legal documents
- Coercion used in signing of wills or releasing property
- Misuse of a power of attorney or a joint bank account
- Lodgers and Roommates. Some elderly people agree to allow a friend or family member to stay with them in exchange for rent or caretaking duties. These arrangements often work well for both parties, but sometimes the lodger doesn't meet his or her obligations under the arrangement

COMMUNITY REFERRAL(S)

Big Country Victim Services Association

After Hours Phone number 403-820-1407

Hanna

P.O. Box 1209

104 – 3rd Ave. W.

HANNA, AB, T0J 1P0

Phone: 403-823-4233

Drumheller

P.O. Box 1030

75 Riverside Drive E.

DRUMHELLER, AB, T0J 0Y0

Phone: 403-823-4233

ATB Hanna Branch

Phone: (403) 854-4404

Mountain View Credit Union Delia Branch

Phone: (403) 364-2671

TD Bank Hanna Branch

Phone: (403) 854-4461

Chinook Financial Hanna Branch

302-Centre Street

Hanna, AB T0J 1P0

Phone: 403-854-3019

Royal Bank of Canada Hanna Branch

301 Centre Street

Hanna, AB T0J 1P0

Phone: 403-854-6003

Phone: 403-854-6022

RCMP Hanna

Phone: 403-854-3391

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

A common theme is a perpetrator who identifies something that matters to an older person and then uses it to coerce the senior into a particular action. It may take verbal forms such as yelling, name calling, ridiculing, constantly criticizing, accusations, blaming, or non verbal forms such as ignoring, silence, shunning or withdrawing affection.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS

- Fear
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Cowering
- Removal of decision-making power while the person is competent
- Secrecy
- Fearful of interaction with caregiver
- Caregiver speaking on behalf of senior
- Not allowing privacy
- Refusing access to grandchildren
- Controlling activities

COMMUNITY REFERRAL(S)

Big Country Victim Services Association

After Hours Phone number 403-820-1407

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104 – 3rd Ave. W.
HANNA, AB, T0J1P0
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RCMP Hanna

Phone: 403-854-3391

Royal Bank of Canada Hanna Branch

301 Centre Street
Hanna, AB T0J 1P0
Phone: 403-854-6003
Phone: 403-854-6022

Hanna Medical Clinic

Phone: 403-854-3351
104 Fox Lake Trail East P.O. Box 700 Hanna, AB T0J 1P0

Helping Hands Home Support Services Ltd

Phone: 403-364-2476
Email: hq.helpinghands@gmail.com

Seniors Outreach Nurse

Drumheller/Hanna
403-820-7863

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse causes physical discomfort, pain or injury. Older persons who are subjected to rough handling or mistreatment are the victims of physical abuse.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS

- Unexplained injuries in various stages of healing
- Frequent medical visits or delay in seeking treatment
- History of accidents or injuries; repeated falls
- Failure to provide adequate health care
- Missing hair, injury to scalp
- Harming or threatening to harm pets
- Forced confinement

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RCMP Hanna

Phone: 403-854-3391

NEGLECT

The Intentional or unintentional failure to provide for the basic needs, necessities and care of an older adult can be classed as neglect.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS

- Inappropriate or dirty clothing
- Poor hygiene
- Dehydration
- Unsafe living conditions
- Failure to provide aids for daily living
- Lack of social contact
- Irregular medical appointments
- Lack of, or poor conditions of dentures, glasses, or hearing aids
- Failure to prevent physical harm

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Phone: 403-854-3351

104 Fox Lake Trail East P.O. Box 700 Hanna, AB T0J 1P0

Seniors Outreach Nurse

Drumheller/Hanna

403-820-7863

Pharmasave Hanna

610 2 Ave West Hanna, Alberta T0J 1P0

Phone: 403- 854-3711

Pharmacy Fax : 403-854-4515

RCMP Hanna

Phone: 403-854-3391

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse includes unwanted forms of sexual activities, behaviours, or harassment including sexual comments, exploitive use of pornography, fondling or sexual assault.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS

- Recent incontinence, agitation
- Pain, bruising or bleeding in the genital or chest area, sexually transmitted diseases
- Depression, changes in mental ability or physical ability
- Decline in general health status

COMMUNITY REFERRAL(S)

Big Country Victims Services Association

After Hours Phone number 403-820-1407

Hanna

P.O. Box 1209

104 – 3rd Ave. W.

HANNA, AB, T0J 1P0

Phone: 403-823-4233

Hanna Medical Clinic

Phone: 403-854-3351

104 Fox Lake Trail East P.O. Box 700 Hanna, AB T0J 1P0

Seniors Outreach Nurse

Drumheller/Hanna

403-820-7863

Drumheller

P.O. Box 1030

75 Riverside Drive E.

DRUMHELLER, AB, T0J 0Y0

Phone: 403-823-4233

RCMP Hanna

Phone: 403-854-3391

MEDICATION ABUSE

Medication abuse includes intentional or unintentional misuse of medications and prescriptions, such as withholding or providing doses that cause bodily harm, sedation or other adverse effects.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS

- Reduced mental or physical abilities
- Decline in general health status including confusion, poor balance, or falling
- Depression
- Recent incontinence, agitation
- Not complying with prescription refills

COMMUNITY REFERRAL(S)

Big Country Victims Services Association

After Hours Phone number 403-820-1407

Hanna

P.O. Box 1209
104 – 3rd Ave. W.
HANNA, AB, T0J1P0
Phone: 403-823-4233

Drumheller

P.O. Box 1030
75 Riverside Drive E.
DRUMHELLER, AB, T0J0Y0
Phone: 403-823-4233

Pharmasave

Calvin Warnock
Phone: 403-854-3711

Hanna Medical Clinic

Phone: 403-854-3351
104 Fox Lake Trail East P.O. Box 700 Hanna, AB T0J 1P0

Helping Hands Home Support Services Ltd

Phone: 403-364-2476
Email: hq.helpinghands@gmail.com

Seniors Outreach Nurse

Drumheller/Hanna
403-820-7863

RCMP – Hanna

Phone: 403-854-3391

Anderson Drug

Phone: 403-854-4357

EXPANDED REFERRAL INFORMATION

Know that you are not alone in responding to a victims needs. Support the senior in connecting to other resources as appropriate for the abuse situation. You may need to obtain consent to make referrals on the senior's behalf.

Banks and Credit Unions (Can address Financial and Emotional Abuse and help with prevention strategies)

Financial Institutions such as banks and credit unions can offer clients financial support and budgeting support as well as advice in the value of Power of Attorneys, Estate Planning, and Wills.

Seniors who need help paying bills or getting groceries etc, (because of health reasons) may sometimes want to add a person to their account. The bank or credit union can provide information and an explanation as to what could happen if an adult child or friend is added to their account and what precautions can be taken to protect the senior's finances. They can also offer seniors helpful suggestions and alternatives. Walk-ins are welcome, however an appointment may be best for some advice solutions.

Helping Hands Home Support Services Ltd. (Can address Medication and Emotional Abuse, Neglect and Physical Abuse and assist with prevention strategies) Helping Hands assists seniors with light housekeeping and meal preparation in their own homes AND are companions to Long Term Care and Lodge residents. They give extra baths, feed, assist and accompany residents to medical appointments, shopping, going for coffee or lunch or even to visit family or friends in the community. They are locally owned and operated, established in 1999 by Penny Leman, an LPN with 20+ years of nursing experience.

Seniors Programs —Helping Hands Home Services provide a variety of services (light housekeeping, meal preparation, errand service, transportation and accompaniment to various appointments in the service area) for seniors or chronically ill adults living independently, allowing them to remain at home for as long as safely possible vs moving into a care facility before they are medically required to do so.

Caregiver Support – Helping Hands Home Services provide support for the family and caregivers of the elderly ie: personal 'one on one' support is given to residents of care facilities (i.e. manors, lodges, long term care) as well as provide the little extras in place of families who care, but can not be present. Visits can be recreational or include such things as visits, cards or games, walks or outings outside of the facility. Helping Hands Home Services also offer **Caregiver respite** assisting with care of loved ones while the primary caregiver is taking a desired or necessary break.

Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) - As an Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee Affiliate, Helping Hands can:

- Provide information to the general public regarding: GUARDIAN and TRUSTEE APPLICATIONS and PERSONAL DIRECTIVES
- Provide personal "hands on" assistance in the Head Office, located in Delia, to complete and submit the necessary applications.
- Provide public presentations to deliver information regarding being a Guardian or Trustee, and understanding and completing Personal Directives

**** Under contract to the Office of the Public Guardian, all of the above services are FREE OF CHARGE to the public. Simply call 403-364-2476 for more information.**

Helping Hands is familiar with several support programs available in your surrounding community that are designed for home independence. More information can be gained simply by calling 1-888-364-2476.

Hanna Medical Clinic (Can address all forms of Elder Abuse and assist with prevention strategies)

In addition to our family physicians, the Hanna Medical Clinic has a **Primary Care Nurse, a Primary Care Dietitian and a Primary Care Wellness Coordinator**. All of the physicians are registered with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta. The Clinic is affiliated with the Big Country Primary Care Network. The medical clinic's team of friendly and experienced doctors and allied health workers provide quality healthcare. Confidentiality is strictly maintained within the clinic.

Hanna Medical Clinic typically makes referrals to Mental Health professionals and Big Country Victim Services.

Registered Nurse: LaWanda McKillop

The Big Country PCN nurse works closely with the physicians in the clinic to provide direct care for complex care patients. LaWanda focuses on chronic disease care and management, disease and injury prevention, prenatal care, anticoagulation management and health promotion. LaWanda provides an essential service in the clinic by improving health care access for patients and offers one on one education services for those who may require it. The Big Country Primary Care Network RN can assist patients in registering for, or provide patients with information on various Primary Care Network and Alberta Health Service programs offered in the community.

Wellness Coordinator: Patrick May

Certified Exercise Physiologists work with healthy populations as well as individuals and families who are challenged by musculoskeletal limitations and cardiovascular, pulmonary, neuromuscular and metabolic diseases. This population can range from pediatrics to seniors. The PCN provides clients with education and guidance for their Chronic Disease Management according to their Best Care Practice. This would include baseline measures and assessment for body composition, aerobic endurance and muscular strength. Working collaboratively within an interdisciplinary team, the exercise specialist is responsible for the evaluation, development, implementation, and maintenance of exercise programs. They educate individuals about healthy lifestyles and teach self-management skills to control health conditions and enhance quality of life. The programs utilized by the Exercise Physiologist follow the PCN's Best Care Practice pathways and are evidence-based, client centered and meet the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP) and/or the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) standards of practice.

Dietitian: Jennifer Heistad

The Primary Care Registered Dietitian works with the doctors and nurses to provide comprehensive nutrition coaching services to patients. An appointment with the Dietitian will be focused on your health goals and needs. She will ask specific questions to better understand your specific situations and then work with the senior to develop a plan to meet their goals. Nutrition information from the media can be conflicting and confusing, and the Dietitian can help individuals sort through it all. She will also provide follow-up support and encouragement to patients for several months.

**Hanna Medical Clinic
Phone# 403-854-3351
104 Fox Lake Trail East
P.O. Box 700
Hanna, AB T0J 1P0
Mon-Thurs 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Friday 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Seniors Mental Health - Seniors Outreach Nurse

The Seniors Mental Health Program provides specialized services for Albertans, with dementia, mood and or thought disorders and other chronic psychiatric illnesses. The Seniors Outreach Nurse works closely with the senior, their community physician, involved family members and other health care professionals in order to identify and address presenting mental health concerns. This may include providing education on the signs and symptoms of mental illness and appropriate clinical interventions. The nurses have access to psychiatrists and other interdisciplinary team members through the Seniors Mental Health Program at the Centennial Centre for Mental Health and Brain Injury in Ponoka.

**Drumheller/Hanna:
Drumheller Health Centre
403-820-7863**

Big Country Victim Services Association (Can address all forms of Elder Abuse and assist with prevention strategies)

After Hours Phone number 403-820-1407

Big Country Victim Services promotes and advocates the rights and entitlements of victims of crime and trauma through information, referral, support, assistance, community liaison and education. Additionally, if the senior needs to get out of an abusive situation Victim Services can offer support in the form of accommodations for example: shelters, hotel, referral to income specialist for subsidies, possible financial support from Victim Services, counselors, Big Country Victim Services typically make referrals to RCMP, Strathmore Shelter, mental health professionals, etc.

Help is confidential and immediate

Pharmasave Pharmacy

Pharmasave is a full service pharmacy, offering free medication reviews to avoid negative interactions between drugs, as well as advice on supplements and foods that may cause problems with medication. Free monthly blister packaging of medications is available. This service is popular with many seniors who take several medications or have trouble remembering to take their medications. Free prescription delivery is also available in Hanna.

610 2 Ave West Hanna, Alberta T0J 1P0

Phone: 403-854-3711

Pharmacy Fax : 403-854-4515

Pharmacy Hours:

Monday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Sundays and Holidays: Closed

Prevention Tips: Medication

Seniors and Medication

Pharmacists are key members of a senior's healthcare team. Pharmacists can provide advice and information on many common health topics and ailments. They have in-depth knowledge of hundreds of medications, including prescription medications, and non-prescription medications, as well as supplements, and herbal remedies. They also can be a liaison between a senior and their doctor if a medication issue is detected.

Proper medication management is critical to overall health. It's common to find that seniors are taking multiple prescription medications, as well as over the counter medications. If not properly monitored, prescribed medications may interact in ways that might affect a person's well-being. The complex interaction of various drugs may lead to less effective treatments, confusion or unwanted side effects.

Tips for Medication Management

Keep a checklist of medications – Help the senior in creating a list of his or her daily medications (prescription and over-the-counter), and include information like:

The time of day each drug should be taken, the dosage and what the medication is for. Also include any special instructions, like take with a meal or a full glass of water.

When seeing the pharmacist or doctor encourage the senior to bring their list of medications to the appointment. The list should be inclusive of any vitamins, herbal remedies, other nutritional products that the senior may also be consuming.

Set medication reminders - Ask the senior to consider setting reminders on a watch or special alarm clock so medications don't get accidentally skipped. Also, it's important to know what to do in the case of a missed medication. A doctor or pharmacist can be consulted for more information.

Don't procrastinate to order refills - It's recommended to refill prescriptions at least a week in advance to avoid running out completely.

Order all prescriptions from the same pharmacy-In addition to ordering refills in advance, encourage the senior to streamline the process by utilizing one pharmacy for all prescriptions. This way, the pharmacist can monitor medications, eliminate possible side effects, and stay on top of any adverse reactions he or she may have to new medications.

Medication Storage -Remind seniors to store their medications in a safe and appropriate place. By reading labels carefully or asking a pharmacist they can determine where best to keep medications. If a senior is unable to protect and manage their own medications someone who is responsible should be asked to help.

Expiry date of medication -Seniors should not use any expired medication, as it may be ineffective or even harmful in some cases. If there is no expiry date, a pharmacist should be consulted.

Outdated medication or medications that are no longer needed -Take these medications to your pharmacist for safe disposal, and remind the senior of the dangers of lending friends or family prescription medications.

Talk to the pharmacist and ask questions—If concerned about the combination of medications or the affects of a new medication, encourage the senior to talk to their doctor or pharmacist. Learn about the dosage, proper storage, side effects and anything else that will help him or her take medications correctly. Seniors should also talk to their doctor or pharmacist if they are thinking about stopping a medication.

Prevention Tips: Financial and General Well-being

Knowledge is the key to protecting our seniors and preventing abuse of older adults. There are many actions seniors and community members can take to prevent elder abuse. When meeting with a senior who may be at risk of abuse or who you suspect is experiencing abuse try to share a few tips.

Financial

- Advise seniors not to give out their bank card and/or PIN numbers to anyone– including close family and friends. Encourage the senior to talk to someone at their bank or credit union about safer alternatives.
- When a senior is considering adding someone (other than their spouse) to a bank account he or she should discuss the implications of “joint accounts” with their financial institution.
- Seniors should be encouraged to direct deposit all pension cheques (Old Age Security and Canada Pension Plan). This can be arranged by contacting Service Canada, making an appointment with your bank or credit union. Automatic bill payments/preauthorized bill payments can help a senior manage the monthly demands of banking. The senior’s bank, credit union or utility company can help with arrangements.
- If a senior keeps a lot of cash in their home, make him or her aware of the risks associated.
- Encourage seniors to be informed about his/her financial affairs, including checking monthly bank statements for any unusual activity.
- Encourage older adults to keep a list of all property, bank accounts and belongings that they own.
- If an older adult is lending money to a relative or friends urge him or her to write a plan for repayment before lending money.
- Acknowledge the importance of reading all documents (especially legal) carefully and entirely. Be sure the senior knows not to sign any documents that are confusing or unclear. And to always ask advice from someone trusted before signing any documents. Remind the senior that he/she shouldn't let anyone pressure him or her into signing documents.
- Suggest that Wills and Power of Attorney documents be updated yearly (with a **Lawyer**) or as their situation changes.

General Well-being

- Talk with the senior about the benefits, risks and complications associated with making changes to their living situation, such as moving in with family or friends or vice versa.
- Encourage older adults to plan for their future while they are still independent and mentally capable (Power of Attorney or Living Will). This preparation will help alleviate associated confusion and family problems later.
- Talk about the benefits of seniors maintaining contact with loved ones, friends and their other support networks.
- Encourage and assist older adults to remain active in their community. Isolation increases vulnerability to abuse. Seniors also need to be encouraged to have their own phone, and be responsible for opening their own mail.
- Seniors need to be able to recognize, identify and respond to elder abuse. Let the senior know there is no harm, or shame in asking for help when it is needed.

Prevention : Caregivers and Caregiver Burnout

Being a caregiver can be rewarding and demanding all at the same time (whether it's caring for a family member or in a professional capacity). It is important to recognize that while some caregivers under stress may react abusively, many others are able to give excellent care even under stress. However, knowing what the risk factors are can help reduce the chance of elder abuse happening.

Some Risk Factors

- Caregivers can feel “trapped”. Often women are expected to take on caregiving roles for older relatives due to social, cultural, and family expectations. This is often in addition to their existing caregiving roles for spouses, children, parents, and others as well as any work and professional obligations.
- Living with the older person for whom you are caring, and not having the physical and mental space to regroup does not allow the caregiver to effectively decompress or take the necessary time away from care responsibilities to meet their own needs.
- Caregiving requires a lot of patience and the ability to make difficult decisions, often sporadically. A lack of coping (i.e.: knowing when to take a break, exercising, talking to friends, etc.) and problem solving skills can make even the most mundane tasks more difficult and increase stress levels. Elder abuse can be both intentional and unintentional.
- Financial difficulty hampers a caregiver's ability to provide effective care for a loved one and themselves. It can also create even greater stress as caregiving and professional work responsibilities are often in conflict with each other.

Regardless of the situation, it is never acceptable for a caregiver to take their frustrations out on the person they are caring for. Unfortunately, there is a very real correlation between caregivers who are under stress and the occurrence of elder abuse.

Tips for Preventing Caregiver Burnout

The demands of caregiving can be overwhelming, especially if the caregiver feels he or she has little control over the situation. If the stress of caregiving is left untreated, it can affect health, relationships, and state of mind—eventually leading to burnout.

- Encourage caregivers to ask for help and to accept help when offered. There is no shame in asking responsible friends and family to help run errands, bring hot meals, or visit with the senior so they can take a well-deserved break. The senior will probably benefit from the change in routine as well.
- Explain the importance of self-care. Caregivers need to make time to rest and to do things that they enjoy. As a result they will be better caregivers.
- Encourage the caregiver to talk to someone they trust. Talking about their experiences and feelings can make care giving less stressful. They should also consider joining a caregiver support group.
- Caregivers and their families should explore local agencies and services in the area that may be able to assist in the caregiving responsibilities, such as Home Care and Helping Hands.
- Urge the caregiver to get the physical and emotional support he or she needs. The stress of caregiving can leave him or her vulnerable to a wide range of problems, including depression, anxiety, and burnout.
- Explain that the dangers of caregiver burnout affect both the caregiver and the older adult in their care.

This Resource is a collaboration of the Hanna and area Elder Abuse Coordinated Community Response Committee. Its purpose is to aid in the provision of effective and efficient community referrals. Some seniors may need to seek services and referrals outside of our community.

Call 911 if it is an emergency – Do not hesitate to call the police if you suspect a crime has been committed or that someone is in danger. If there is no immediate danger, call your local police to discuss your concerns with a police officer.

Hanna RCMP

Address: 104-3rd Avenue West
Administrative Office: 403-854-3393
Hours: 8:00 a.m to 4:30 p.m
24hr Dispatch: 403-854-3391
(To report an accident or compliant)

Big Country Victim Services

P.O. Box 1209
104 – 3rd Ave. W.
HANNA, AB., T0J 1P0
403-823-4233
After hours 403-820-1407

Big Country Victim Services

P.O. Box 1030
75 Riverside Drive E.
DRUMHELLER, AB., T0J 0Y0
403-823-4233
After hours 403-820-1407

Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council

<http://www.albertaelderabuse.ca/>

Office of the Seniors Advocate Alberta

Phone: 1-844-644-0682

Golden Circle Seniors Emergency Shelter

Phone : 1-877-454-2580
Business Hours Phone: 403-343-6074

Alberta Family Violence Information Line

Phone: 310-1818 toll-free (24 hours) for information, advice and referrals.

Health Link Alberta

Phone: 1-866-408-5465 (24 hours)
Provides telephone advice and information on health related topics.

Office of the Public Guardian

Phone: 1-877-427-4525
Provides decision-making mechanisms for individuals who are unable to make personal non-financial decisions for themselves.

Office of the Public Trustee

Phone: 780-427-2744 (Edmonton)
403-297-6541 (Calgary)
Call toll-free from anywhere in the province by dialing 310-0000. Protects the financial interest of vulnerable Albertans by administering their estates.

Protection for Person in Care

Phone: 1-888-357-9339
To report abuse or safety concerns for seniors in publicly funded care facilities including hospitals, seniors lodges and long term care facilities.

Information found this resource was referenced from several sources including the Government of Alberta *Service Provider Screening Guide for Elder Abuse*

