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Information Release

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June 15, is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is observed annually on June 15. Elder abuse is an under-recognized problem, with devastating and even life-threatening consequences. Nationally, every year an estimated 2.1 million older Americans are victims of elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation. And that's only part of the picture: Experts believe that for every case of elder abuse or neglect reported, as many as five cases go unreported.

What Is Elder Abuse?

Elder abuse refers to intentional or negligent acts by a caregiver or trusted individual that causes harm to a vulnerable elder. Elder abuse takes many forms, including:

Neglect	Financial abuse and exploitation
Physical abuse	Emotional or psychological abuse
Sexual abuse	Self-neglect

Who Is at Risk for Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation?

Elder abuse can happen to anyone—a loved one, a neighbor, and when we are old enough, it can even happen to us. Elder abuse affects seniors across all socio-economic groups, cultures, and races. Elder abuse can occur anywhere:

- In a person's own home
- In nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other institutional settings
- In hospitals.

Some common risk factors:

- Dementia
- Mental health or substance abuse issues (victim, perpetrator, or both)
- Social isolation

Poor physical health, which increases vulnerability and therefore may increase risk

What Are the Signs of Elder Abuse?

Elder abuse happens, more often than you'd suspect. Learn the warning signs and act to protect seniors.

Some common warning signs:

- Inadequately explained fractures, bruises, welts, cuts, sores, or burns;
- Lack of basic hygiene, food or appropriate clothing;
- Person with dementia left unsupervised;
- Person confined in bed is left without care;
- Home is cluttered, dirty, or in disrepair;
- Home lacks adequate facilities (stove, refrigerator, heating and cooling, plumbing, or electricity);
- Untreated bed sores or pressure ulcers;
- Unexplained or uncharacteristic changes in behavior, such as withdrawal from normal activities, or unexplained changes in alertness;
- Caregiver isolates the elder (doesn't let anyone in the home or speak to the elder);
- Caregiver is verbally aggressive or demeaning, controlling, or uncaring.

What Can People Do to Prevent Elder Abuse?

Report suspected mistreatment to Aging and Disability Services Division or your local law enforcement agency. Although a situation may have already been investigated, if you believe circumstances are getting worse, continue to speak out.

If you believe that an elder is in a life-threatening situation, contact 911 or the local police or sheriff's department.

For more information about Elder Abuse contact Carrie Embree, Social Services Manager, Aging and Disability Services Division, at (775) 687-0517 or clembree@adsd.nv.gov.

If you suspect Elder Abuse – Report It 1-888-729-0571

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