

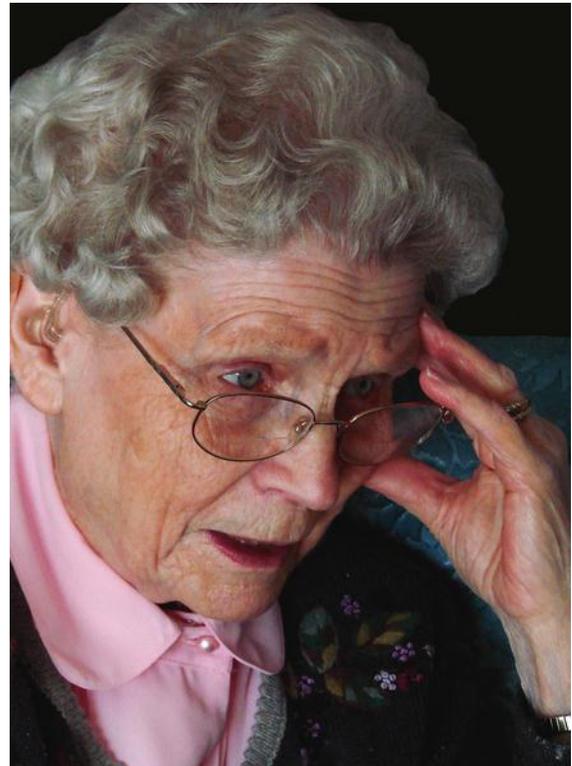
MODULE 4: LEARNING THE LAW

Module objectives:

1. Discuss why elder abuse is underreported.
2. Explore what is involved in reporting a suspected case of abuse.

Why does the resident not report Elder Abuse?

- Does not recognize the behaviour as abusive.
- Does not know where to get help.
- Fears retribution.
- Feels humiliated.
- Takes blame for the abuse.
- Fears a loss of relationship with abuser.
- Believes that family honour is at stake
- Believes that privacy is at stake
- Unable to express themselves due to physical and/or psychological deficiencies.



Fast Fact

The National Center on Elder Abuse estimates that 84% (5 out of 6) of elder abuse cases are unreported.¹

Why is it difficult for staff to report?

- Fear
 - Revenge
 - Job loss
 - Lack of support
 - Getting someone into trouble
 - Getting involved
- Lack of knowledge
 - What is abuse
 - What can be done
 - Laws & Protocols
 - Resources within or outside the facility
 - Protocols and procedures



Reporting a Suspected Case of Abuse

- Any form of abuse or suspected abuse should be reported to your administration as soon as possible.
- From an employment perspective, the individual accused of abuse could be subject to:
 - Reprimand
 - Suspension
 - Dismissal
- If found guilty of committing any forms of abuse, an individual could be prosecuted under criminal law.

The Department of Social Development and Adult Protection

- The Department of Social Development is responsible for the administration of the regulations governing nursing homes.
- Adult Protection’s main goal is to protect the adult whose welfare may be in jeopardy.
- As a follow-up to a complaint, the administration of a facility is responsible for contacting the Department of Social Development.

Know the Process

In order to protect the victim and facilitate investigation, it’s important for you to be aware of the reporting protocols within your facility.

- Do you know to whom you should be reporting incidents?
- What type of information should you provide?

Every Action Has a Repercussion

You hold a responsibility to report any situation you may suspect is abusive. Choosing not to report an incident leaves the door open for future abuse to occur and further problems to develop.

“Evidence suggests that abuse and neglect of elderly persons is associated with increased mortality rates. A study of 2,400 deaths in Arkansas nursing homes found 50 cases of suspected abuse or neglect. It was found that the risk of death for abuse and neglect victims is three time higher that for non-victims. Although not specifically from a nursing home context, morbidity associated with elder abuse includes fractures, depression, dementia, and malnutrition.”²

Module Key Points:

1. There are many reasons why cases of abuse remain unreported.
2. In order to stop the cycle of abuse, incidents should be reported immediately, regardless of the situation.

References:

- 1- Castle, Nicholas (Nov, 2010) Nurse Aides' Reports of Resident Abuse in Nursing Homes, Journal of Applied Gerontology, November 2010
- 2- Castle, Nicholas (Nov, 2010) Nurse Aides' Reports of Resident Abuse in Nursing Homes, Journal of Applied Gerontology, November 2010