



*Charles E. Smith
Life Communities*

Safeguarding seniors from abuse



**Elder Abuse Prevention and Response:
How Safe Shelter & Multidisciplinary Teamwork
Can Protect Older Adults From Abuse**

Leading Age Conference

September 15, 2016



Objectives of Presentation

- Learn the types of elder abuse
- Identify the barriers to addressing elder abuse
- See how the ElderSAFE Center works with its multidisciplinary team to strengthen community's elder abuse response



What is Elder Abuse?

Elder abuse “includes physical, sexual or psychological abuse, as well as neglect, abandonment, and financial exploitation of an older person by another person or entity, that occurs in any setting (e.g., home, community, or facility), either in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and/or when an older person is targeted based on age or disability.” (Elder Justice Roadmap report, 2014)



What are the types of Elder Abuse?

- **Physical:** Use of force causing pain, harm or physical injury. Kicking, hitting, pushing, slapping, or pinching are examples of physical abuse, and injuries may include: bruises, burns, cuts, or welts. Inappropriate use of medications or physical restraints can also be forms of physical abuse.
- **Sexual:** Any type of non-consensual sexual contact.
- **Psychological:** Mistreatment that affects someone's emotional or mental health, including: intimidation, threats, harassment, humiliation, belittlement, or isolation.
- **Neglect:** Willful deprivation of one's basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, medicine, or personal hygiene).
- **Self-Neglect:** The inability to provide for one's own physical or psychological needs which causes risk to that person's health or safety.
- **Financial Exploitation:** The misuse of another's person's money, property or resources for self-gain.



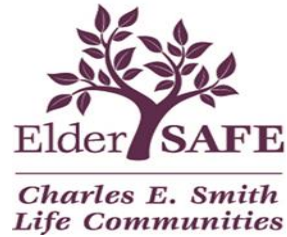
Scope of Elder Abuse

- Elder Abuse is a growing global problem that affects everyone.
- According to the Alliance on Aging, and other reports, for every 1 case reported, 23 go unreported.
- Elder Abuse affects nearly 5 million individuals every year in the U.S. resulting in \$5.3 billion in healthcare costs and \$2.9 billion in losses due to financial exploitation.
- The population 65 and over has increased from 35 million in 2000 to 41.4 million in 2011 (an 18% increase) and is projected to more than double to 92 million in 2060.



Barriers

- Abuse often happens in relationships of trust
- Older adult may not know abuse is happening, afraid, ashamed, dependent on abuser, and/or does not want abuser to be punished or taken away
- Mental capacity issues
- Need more community resources to provide early detection and intervention



Screening questions

- Professionals may not be asking the right questions
- Ask questions in a way that allows older adult to tell story in a narrative manner without labels, judgments or conclusions
- Abuse victims who have experienced trauma do not tell stories in a linear manner
- There is not a right way or wrong way to react to abuse



Our Journey





Need For Specialized Shelter

- Elder abuse requires a specialized response
- Existing domestic violence shelters typically do not have the holistic care and physical infrastructure required to assist older adults with their healthcare and therapeutic needs
- Domestic violence shelters focus on intimate partner and family violence where as elder abuse can also encompass caregiver abuse. Caregivers may or may not be related.



The ElderSAFE Center





Shelter





ElderSAFE Model

- Our ElderSAFE Center is located within our long-term care facilities: Wasserman and Smith-Kogod Residences
- Our Center's Language Accessible Helpline 301.816.5099 is in operation M-F from 9am-5pm to make referrals
- Our Center accepts agency or program referrals from Maryland, Washington DC and Northern Virginia



Who is eligible?

- Victims of physical, sexual, psychological, financial abuse, and/ or neglect
- 60 years of age or older
- Willing to be placed in temporary shelter
- Willing to not contact abuser during shelter stay



ElderSAFE Services

- Medical
- Music and yoga therapy
- Physical, occupational and/or speech
- Psychological services
- Spiritual support
- Safe discharge



Challenges

- Mental capacity Issues
- Mandatory Reporting
- Safe discharge vs self determination
- Preconceived ideas about NH placement





Multidisciplinary Partnerships: Key to Success!

- **State's Attorney's Office**
- **Police Elder Abuse Unit**
- **First Responders**
- **Adult Protective Services**
- **Ombudsman**
- **Hospitals**
- **Social Services Agencies**
- **Faith Leaders**



Education





ElderSAFE

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Advocacy





Goals

- Outreach
- Educate
- Build Awareness





Freedom from Abuse





Stay Connected

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