

## SIGNS OF ADULT MALTREATMENT

### SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE:

- Bruising or sores around breasts and genital area
- Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding
- Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections
- Unexplained pregnancy
- Torn, stained, bloody, or missing underclothing
- Avoidance of specific settings or individuals
- Changes in personality or behavior
- Excessive crying spells or signs of depression
- Social withdrawal
- Eating disorders or appetite loss
- Response to "triggers"
- Sleep disturbances
- Substance abuse
- Secret relationships
- Sexually-inappropriate behavior
- Change in self-esteem
- Resisting examination, either medical or dental
- Self-destructive behavior
- Regression to child-like behavior
- Sudden loss of independent living skills

### SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE:

- Bruises, black eyes, welts, lacerations, rope marks, burns, or broken bones
- Open wounds, cuts, punctures
- Untreated injuries in various stages of healing
- Broken eyeglasses/frames or any physical signs of being punished or restrained
- Laboratory findings of either an overdose or under dose of medications
- Individual's report of being hit, slapped, kicked, or mistreated
- Injuries that are the shape of objects
- Skin infections
- Vulnerable adult's sudden change in behavior, i.e. increase in behaviors, striking out at others

- Caregiver's refusal to allow visitors to see a vulnerable adult alone
- A person being taken to many different places to receive medical attention
- Behavior that indicates the VA is afraid of the perpetrator such as cowering or looking away

### SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL/MENTAL ABUSE

- Being emotionally upset or agitated
- Being extremely withdrawn
- Non communicative or non responsive
- Change in behavior or exhibiting unusual behavior such as sucking, biting or rocking
- Nervousness around certain people
- An individual's report of being verbally or mentally mistreated
- Not being able to speak for one's self in presence of caregiver/perpetrator
- Perpetrator observed blaming or scapegoating elder
- Perpetrator ignoring the elder
- No longer attending or participating in events they enjoyed and/or spending time with friends

### NEGLECT/SELF NEGLECT

- Dehydration, malnutrition, untreated or improperly attended medical conditions
- Poor personal hygiene (unkempt, dirty, and body odor)
- Hazardous or unsafe living conditions
- Unsanitary or unclean living quarters (e.g., animal or insect infestation, fecal and urine smells, non-working plumbing)
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing, lack of necessary medical aids
- Inadequate medical care, not taking prescribed medications properly
- An individual's report of being mistreated
- Unusual weight loss
- Bed sores (pressure sores)
- Little or no food available

- Feces or urine soaked bedding
- Hoarding
- Unsafe use of household appliances

**SIGNS OF FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION**

- Frequent, expensive gifts from an elder to a caregiver
- Personal belongings, papers, credit cards are missing
- Bills start to stack up and are not paid, often leading to shut off notices
- A recent Will is made when the person doesn't seem capable of writing a Will
- A caregiver's name is added to the bank account or credit cards
- The elderly person is unaware of his or her monthly income
- There is an increase in the number of checks made out to "cash"
- There are irregularities on tax returns
- Someone sells assets and properties
- There is unusual or erratic activity in the bank account that is uncharacteristic of the account holder
- Hoarding behavior, such as carrying all their papers and/or valuable items in large bags all the time
- Brings strangers with them to the bank
- The elder is unaware of the reason for an appointment with their banker or attorney
- Caregiver refuses to spend money on the older person including grooming items and food
- Frequently forgets items such as personal effects (purse, wallet, coat, and umbrella) and items necessary to do business (checkbook, deposit slips, and so forth)
- Frequently asks the same question over a short period of time
- Noticeable changes in appearance and grooming
- Unusual withdrawals
- Changes in mood
- Changes in stance or mobility
- Changes in eye contact and vocal qualities (such as stammering, whispering, and brief

- Lack of supervision

answers, when these qualities are different from the elder's normal manner of speaking.) Changes in physical distance between the elder and the bank employee.

- Cringing, withdrawing, and sudden expressions of fear
- Reluctance to engage in normal conversation
- Nervousness or fear of the person accompanying the elder
- Seeming to be not permitted to speak for himself/herself
- Disorientation – a person may come to the bank when it is closed or have difficulty finding the bank or, once inside the bank have difficulty remembering why he/she is there
- Paranoia – accusing employees of mismanaging money (charges that require review by a professional agency to determine whether they have merit or are distortions of reality)
- Suspicious changes in Wills and Power of Attorney, titles and policies

**OTHER INDICATORS**

- Chemical dependency
- Untreated mental illness
- Abuse toward animals
- Obsession with fire setting

\*\* Compiled in 2012 for the MN World Elder Abuse Awareness Conference by Kelli Klein(DHS) & Heather Cherry (Olmsted Co.).