

Identifying and Supporting Victims of Elder Abuse on Hotlines



Keeley Frank, LGSW
VictimConnect Resource Center
National Center for Victims of Crime

Trigger Warning

Overview

- Poll
- Hotline Consortium/VC
- Mandatory Reporting
- Special Considerations
- Identifying Older Callers
- Tips
- Case Study
- Q & A
- Resources

Poll

1. What type of hotline do you work on?
2. Does anyone work specifically with older adults?
3. Does anyone work with victims?

Defining Elder Abuse & Older Adults

- Variations in aging services
- 60 and over
- All crimes by all people

National Hotline Consortium

- Formed in 2015
- Nation's leading hotlines
- Discuss best practices
- Emerging trends
- Technology innovation



VictimConnect

- 100% anonymous
- Call/chat/text
- Resources & referrals
- All Crimes
- Data overview



Mandatory Reporting

- Do you have mandatory reporting on your hotline?
- Varies from state to state
- Check with your supervisor/licensing board
- Anonymous vs identifying hotlines

Special Considerations

- First experience vs lifelong
- Historical trauma & cultural considerations
- Older adults experience every crime category
- 3x mortality rate
- Considered underreported
- Research is limited

Identifying Older Callers

- Listen for context clues
- Listen to terminology
- Explain why you are asking for age
- Older callers may tell you immediately
- Make a note if they say age is important

Tips

- Winston the dog
- Ask if it is safe to talk, have an exit plan
- Use the terminology they use
- Lower the pitch of your voice, but raise the volume
- Offer options and resources
- Assure confidentiality of the hotline caller
- Explain why you are asking questions
- Self-care

Case Study

I need to know where to report abuse. Hospital staff hurt my mom and when I tried speaking to a supervisor they gave me the run-around. I asked to speak to security and was told to sit down. A few days later I called the police to report what happened and they didn't believe me. They took the hospital's side. No one is listening to me.

1. What questions would you ask?
2. What could make this elder abuse?

Case Study

I hope you can help me. I believe my mom murdered my dad. She was his caregiver and I think she let him die. I tried talking to the police about it, but they said there was nothing they could do now that he is dead.

1. What questions would you ask?
2. What could make this elder abuse?

Case Study

I need to know if this is a scam. A man called me and said that he worked for the IRS. He said that I owed back taxes and there was a warrant out for my arrest. He gave me an account number and his badge number. I sent him money but he keeps calling and now he's threatening me. I can't go to jail. I thought I paid my taxes right last year, but now I don't know. Am I going to get arrested?

1. What questions would you ask?
2. What could make this elder abuse?

Case Study

I need to report elder abuse in my nursing home. I've already called APS, my ombudsman, and the director here but no one will listen. All of the staff here speak too firmly with me.

1. What questions would you ask?
2. What could make this elder abuse?

Resources

- Eldercare.acl.gov
- Sageusa.org
- Napsa-now.org
- Legalhotlines.org
- Theconsumervoice.org
- Strongheartshelpline.org
- ncler.acl.gov