

## Types of Abuse/Signs & Symptoms

'No Secrets' identifies categories of abuse. They are:

| <b>Physical Abuse</b>  |  |
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| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Abusive Action</b></p> <p>Hitting. Slapping. Pushing. Kicking.<br/>Misuse of medication. Restraint.<br/>Inappropriate sanctions.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Signs &amp; Symptoms</b></p> <p>Series of unexplained falls or major injuries. Injuries/bruises at different stages of healing. Bruising in unusual sites e.g. inner arms, thighs.<br/>Abrasions. Teeth indentations.<br/>Injuries to head or face. Client very passive.</p> |

| <b>Sexual Abuse</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Abusive Action</b></p> <p>Including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could consent, or was pressured into consenting.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Signs &amp; Symptoms</b></p> <p>Change in behaviour. Overt sexual behaviour or language. Difficulty in walking, sitting. Injuries to genital and/or anal area.</p> |

| <b>Neglect</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Abusive Action</b></p> <p>Includes acts of omission. Ignoring physical or medical care needs. Failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services. Withholding necessities of life e.g. medications, nutrition, heating.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Signs &amp; Symptoms</b></p> <p>Absence of food, heat, hygiene, clothing, comfort. Preventing client to have access to services. Isolation. Absence of prescribed medication.</p> |

| <b>Psychological Abuse</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Abusive Action</b></p> <p>Emotional abuse. Threats of harm or abandonment. Deprivation of contact. Humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Signs &amp; Symptoms</b></p> <p>Withdrawal, depression. Cowering and fearfulness. Change in sleep patterns. Agitation, confusion, change in behaviour. Change in appetite/weight.</p> |

| <b>Financial Abuse</b>   |  |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Abuse Action</b></p> <p>Theft, fraud, exploitation. Pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions. Misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Signs &amp; Symptoms</b></p> <p>Unpaid bills. Basic needs not being met. lack of cash on day to day basis.</p> |

| <b>Institutional Abuse</b>   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Abusive Action</b>  | <b>Signs &amp; Symptoms</b>   |
| Poor care standards, lack of positive responses to complex needs. Rigid routines. Inadequate staffing. Insufficient knowledge base within service. | Inability to make choices or decisions. Agitation if routine broken. Disorientation. Patterns of challenging behaviour- |

| <b>Discriminatory</b>   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Abusive Action</b>   | <b>Signs &amp; Symptoms</b>                           |
| Racist, sexist, or that based on a person's disability. Other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. Failure of agencies to ensure that staff receive adequate anti-discrimination practice training. | Low self esteem. Withdrawal. Depression. Fear. Anger. |

## **Risk Indicators**

**These may be additional indicators that abuse is occurring:**

- destruction of physical environment
- turning night into day/sleep disturbance
- chronic incontinence
- extreme physical and/or emotional dependence
- verbal abuse and aggression towards the carer
- changes in personality caused by illness and/or medication
- non compliance with carers wishes
- obsessive behaviour
- wandering/absconding
- self harm

**Where the preceding trigger behaviours by the vulnerable adult are apparent, the following problems exhibited by the carer may increase the risk and likelihood of an abusive situation:**

- alcoholism
- mental illness
- stress
- chronic fatigue
- conflicting demands or other family members

**There may also be a variety of other contributing factors such as a family history:**

- marital violence
- child abuse
- previous relationship difficulties
- conflicting demands of other family members

**Family problems:**

- housing
- financial
- employment
- lack of support
- lack of respite

**Individual unmet needs:**

- lack of appropriate opportunities for the experience of all types of personal relationships
- lack of appropriate opportunity for individual autonomy or choice
- lack of knowledge of information and support

**Organisational factors:**

- weak or oppressive management
- inadequate staffing (numbers, competence)
- inadequate staff supervision support
- closed communication