

Wisconsin's Annual Report on Abuse, Neglect, and Financial Exploitation of Adults at Risk

2009

P-00123 (08/2010)

***Introduction:* The Annual Adults-at-Risk Report**

County agencies in Wisconsin receive abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation referrals and respond to them, determining whether a situation of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation exists and creating individualized service plans to assist adults at risk and help ensure their safety.

After responding to a referral, county agencies file a report with the Department of Health Services, using the web-based Wisconsin Incident Tracking System (WITS). A compilation of all county reports from 2009 are the basis of this statewide Annual Adults-at-Risk Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Report.

This report documents reported incidents involving adults at risk ages 18-59, providing information about the types of abuse reported, characteristics of the adults at risk and alleged abusers, and local responses which guide the State's efforts to stop abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults at risk.

Introduction: The Annual Adults-at-Risk Report

In 2009, 1,451 incidents of suspected abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation involving adults age 18-59 were reported. Analysis of the reports reveals some differences from elder abuse reports, and also some parallels to them.

For instance, financial exploitation is the primary concern in one out of five reported elder abuse incidents, but in only one out of seven incidents involving younger adults. However, physical and sexual abuse are much more commonly reported for younger adults at risk.

For both age groups, relatives make up the largest share of alleged abusers (about 52% for younger adults at risk, and 68% for older adults at risk).

Who is considered an Adult at Risk?

- For the **purposes of this annual report**, the definition of an “adult at risk” is:
 - an adult between the **ages of 18 to 59 years**;
 - who has any physical or mental impairment that substantially restricts his or her ability to care for his or her needs; and,
 - who has experienced or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- An adult at risk *does not* require membership in a categorical group (i.e., developmental disabilities, degenerative brain disorder, serious and persistent mental illness, or other like incapacities)
- An adult at risk *does not* require impairment in ability to provide for care or custody of himself or herself.

Your Role in Reporting Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation of Adults-at-Risk

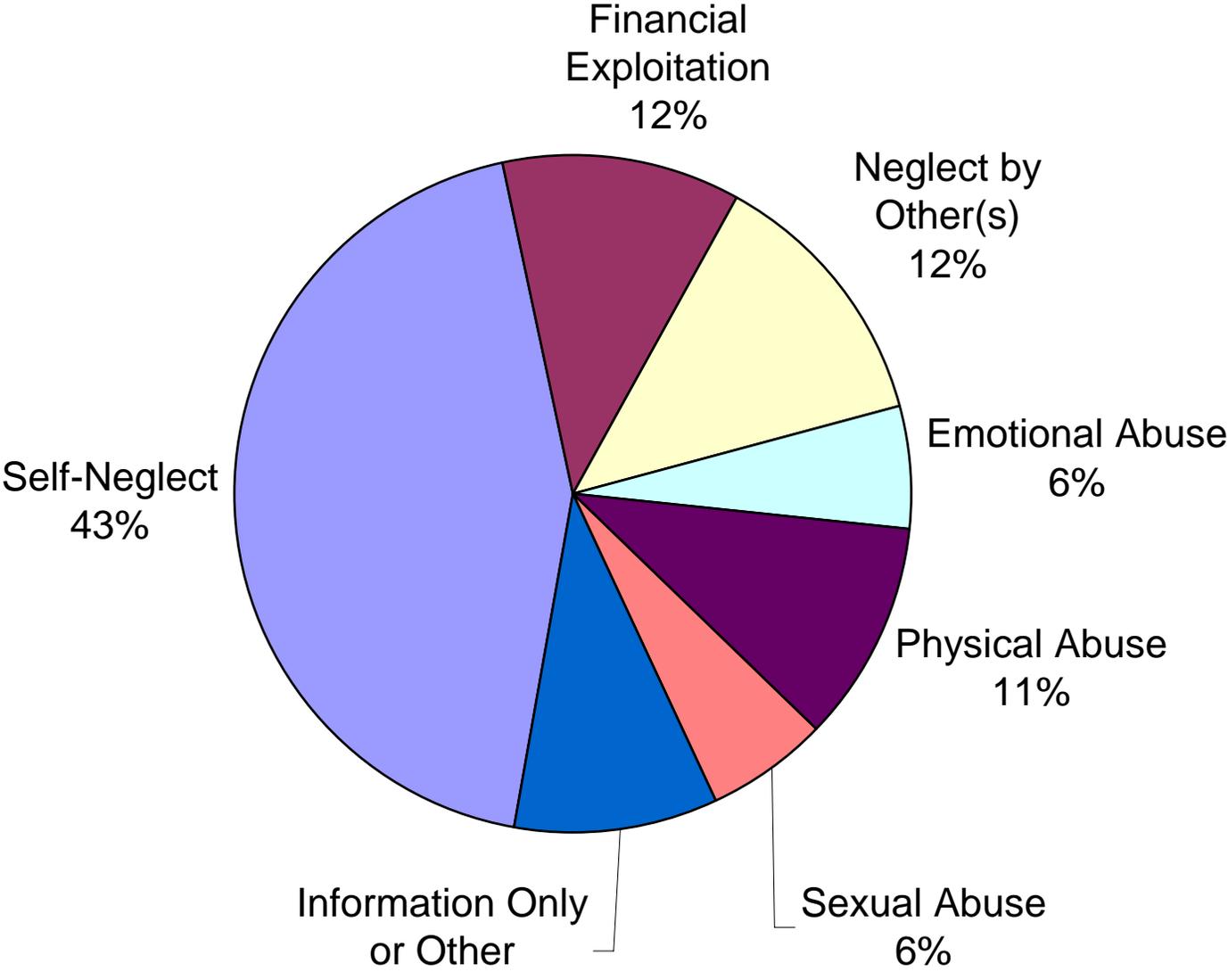
- Wisconsin has made great strides in identifying and protecting adults at risk. No one should experience or endure abuse, neglect or exploitation. Let individuals you are concerned about know they are not alone, and that there are others who understand, will not judge, are there to help them stay safe, and will support them emotionally. Provide reassurance that what they are experiencing is not their fault.
- Call your County Help Line if you need to talk to someone about suspected abuse of an adult at risk (age 18 to 59). See <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/aps/Contacts/aaragencies.htm>

Primary Issue Identified

	Number	Percent
Self-Neglect	697	43.8%
Financial Exploitation	183	11.5%
Neglect by Other(s)	203	12.8%
Emotional Abuse	93	5.8%
Physical Abuse	168	10.6%
Sexual Abuse	91	5.7%
Treatment without Consent	0	0.0%
Unreasonable Confinement/Restraint	16	1.0%
<i>Information Only*</i>	140	8.8%
Total	1,591	100.0%

** Note: Calls for "information only" do not involve allegations of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation, and are not included in the analytic tables.*

Primary Issue Identified



Previous Report on This Individual?

	Number	Percent
No	940	66.4%
Yes	299	21.1%
Unknown	176	12.4%
Total	1,415	100.0%

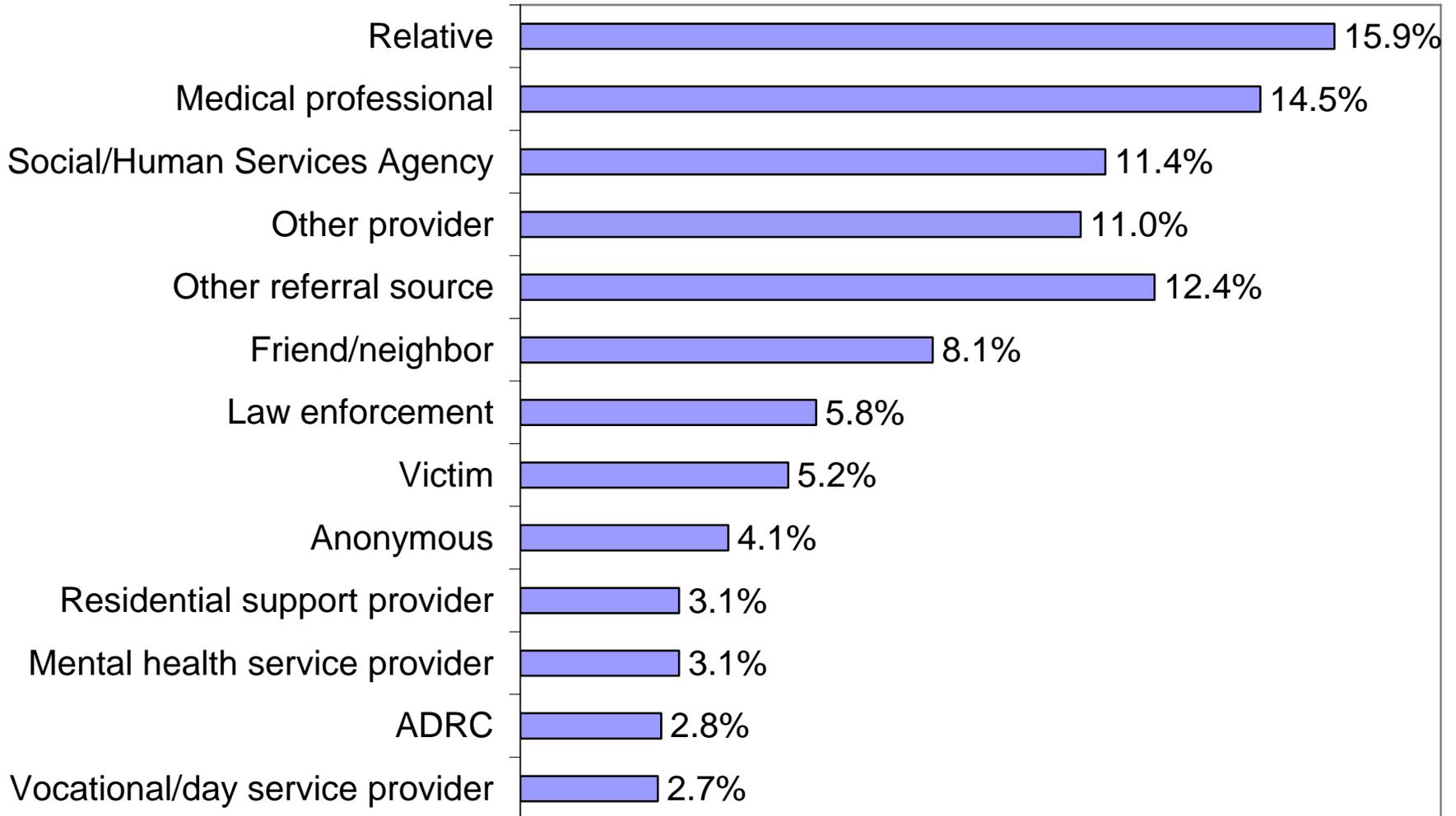
Where Incident Occurred

	Number	Percent
Place of residence	1,226	84.5%
Other place	176	12.1%
Place of employment/day services	33	2.3%
School	8	0.6%
Transportation	8	0.6%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Referral Source

	Number	Percent
Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)	40	2.8%
Social/Human Services Agency	166	11.4%
Alleged abuser	2	0.1%
Anonymous	59	4.1%
Employer	9	0.6%
Friend/neighbor	117	8.1%
Housing inspection/zoning	14	1.0%
Law enforcement	84	5.8%
Medical professional	210	14.5%
Mental health service provider	45	3.1%
Other provider	159	11.0%
Other referral source	148	10.2%
Regulatory authority (DHS/DQA)	7	0.5%
Relative	231	15.9%
Residential support provider	45	3.1%
Victim	76	5.2%
Vocational/day service provider	39	2.7%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Referral Source



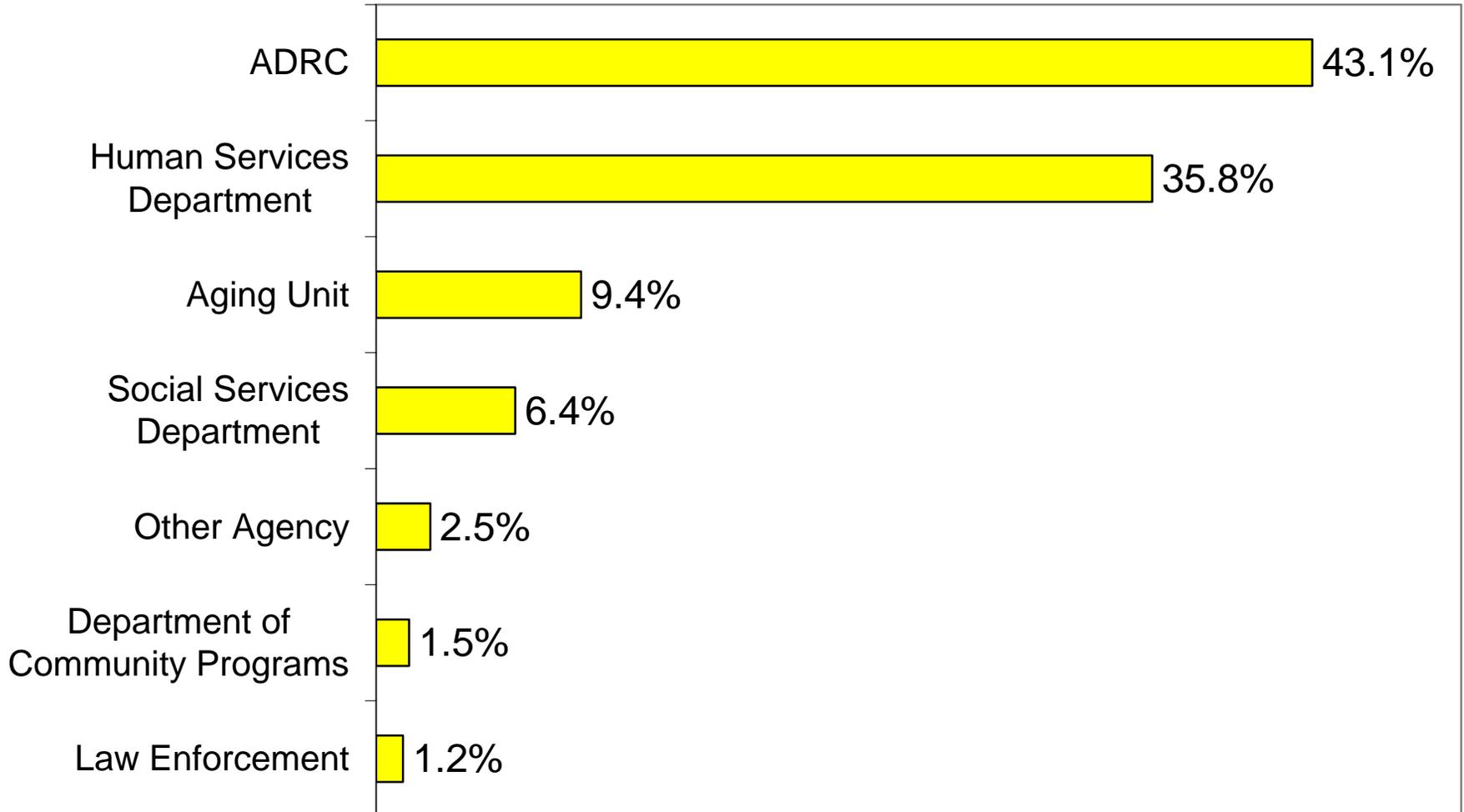
Call Received By

	Number	Percent
Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)	626	43.1%
Aging Unit	137	9.4%
Department of Community Programs-51.42/437 B	22	1.5%
Developmental Disability Board	3	0.2%
Human Services Department	519	35.8%
Law Enforcement	18	1.2%
Other Agency	33	2.3%
Social Services Department	93	6.4%
Total	1,451	100.0%

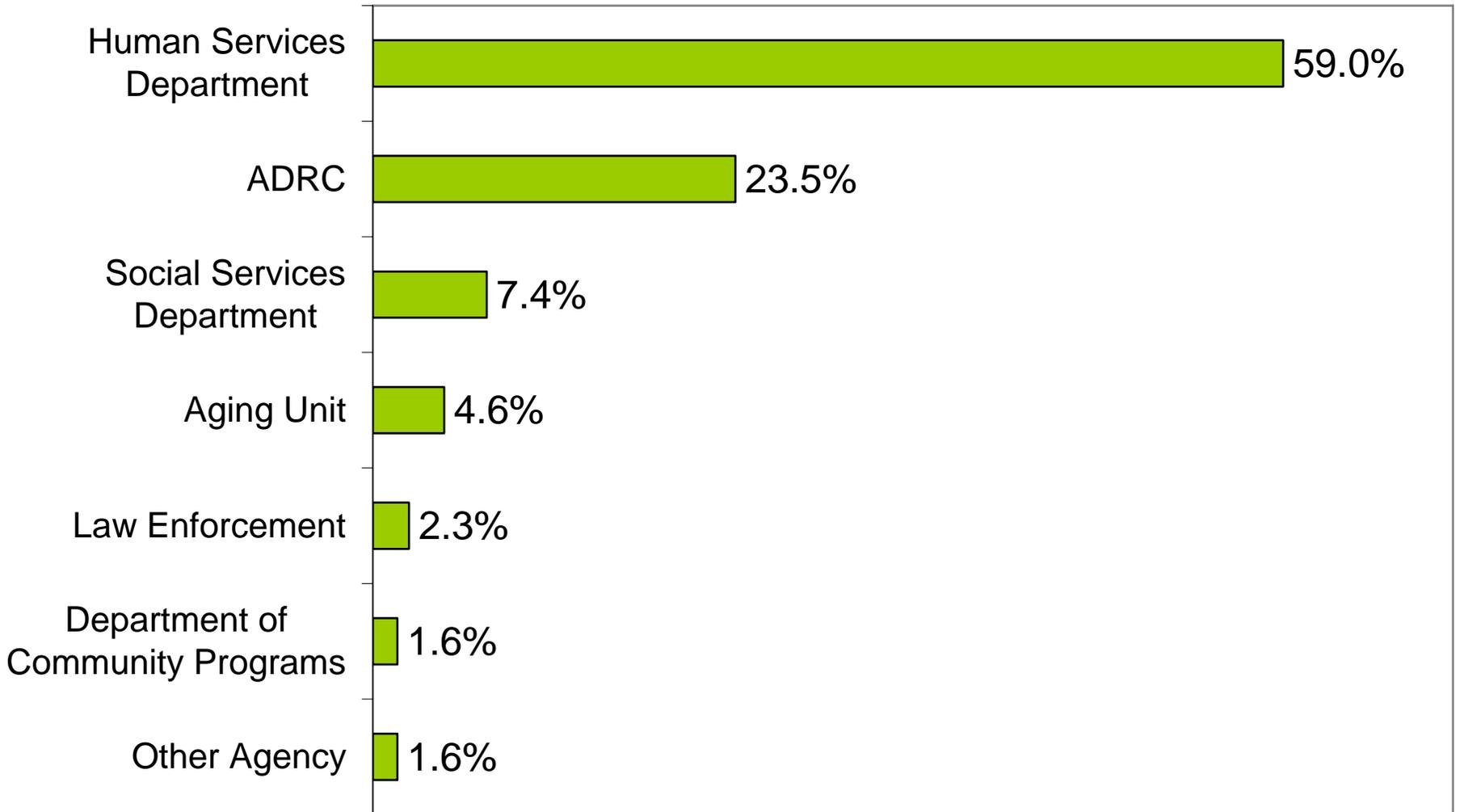
Initial Investigating Agency

	Number	Percent
Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)	341	23.5%
Aging Unit	67	4.6%
Department of Community Programs-51.42/437 B	23	1.6%
Developmental Disability Board	4	0.3%
Human Services Department	856	59.0%
Law Enforcement	34	2.3%
Other Agency	15	1.0%
Public Health Department	4	0.3%
Social Services Department	107	7.4%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Call Received By



Initial Investigating Agency



Was Incident Life Threatening?		
	Number	Percent
No	1,312	90.4%
Yes	96	6.6%
Unknown	43	3.0%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Has Adult at Risk Died?		
	Number	Percent
No	81	84.4%
Yes	15	15.6%
Total	96	100.0%
<i>Note: Percents represent share of all life-threatening incidents.</i>		

Was Death Related to the Incident?		
	Number	Percent
No	4	26.7%
Yes	7	46.7%
Unknown	4	26.7%
Total	15	100.0%
<i>Note: Percents represent share of all incidents involving a death.</i>		

Was Death Directly Caused by Incident?		
	Number	Percent
No	3	42.9%
Yes	1	14.3%
Unknown	3	42.9%
Total	7	100.0%
<i>Note: Percents represent share of all incidents involving a death.</i>		

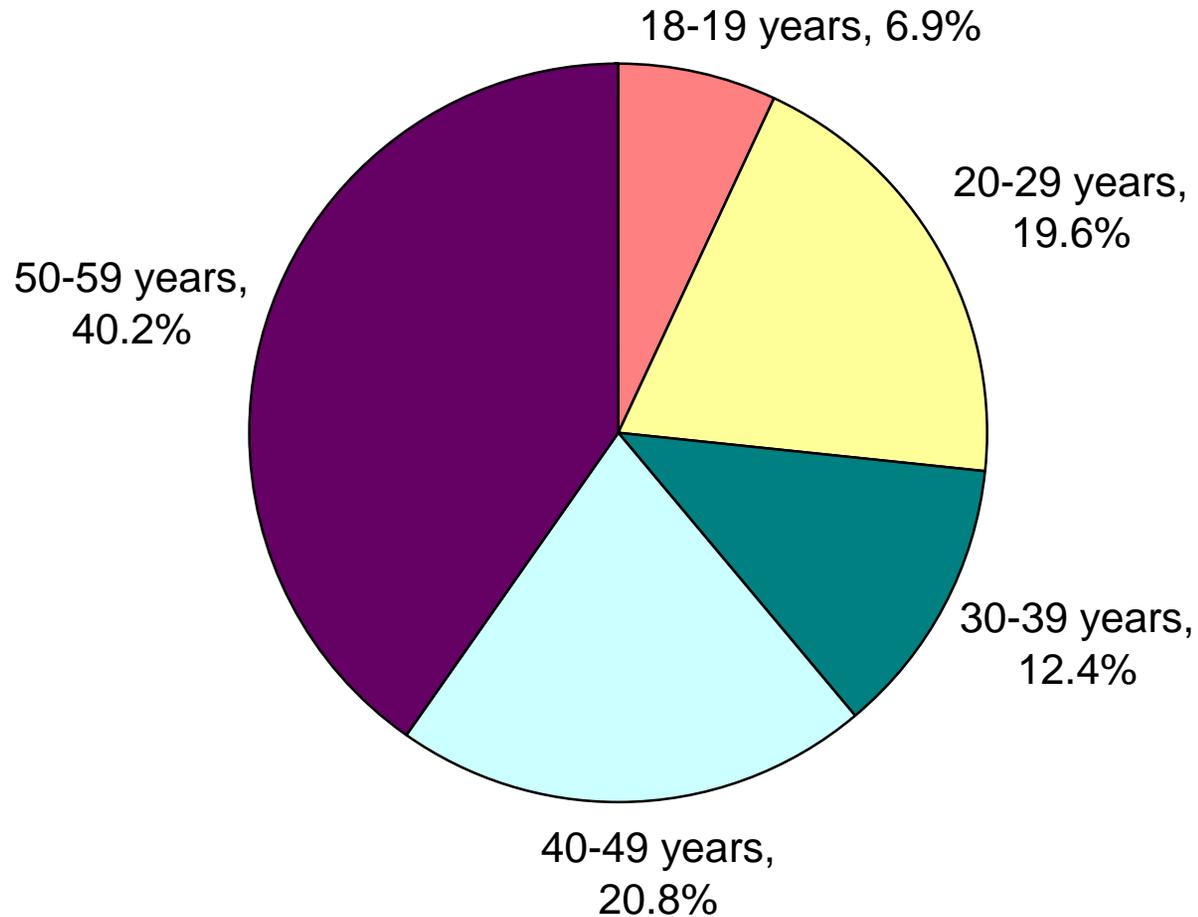
Adult at Risk's Age		
	Number	Percent
18-19 years	100	6.9%
20-29 years	285	19.6%
30-39 years	180	12.4%
40-49 years	302	20.8%
50-59 years	584	40.2%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Adult at Risk's Gender		
	Number	Percent
Female	756	52.1%
Male	695	47.9%
Unknown	0	0.0%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Adult at Risk's Race		
	Number	Percent
White	1,038	71.5%
Black/African American	150	10.3%
Native American/Alaska Native	33	2.3%
Asian	13	0.9%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	0.1%
Other race	26	1.8%
Not reported or unknown	190	13.1%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Notes: Race and Ethnicity are optional fields, so some reports are missing this information. Although data may be incomplete, percents represent the share of all complete reports that showed each race/ethnicity category.

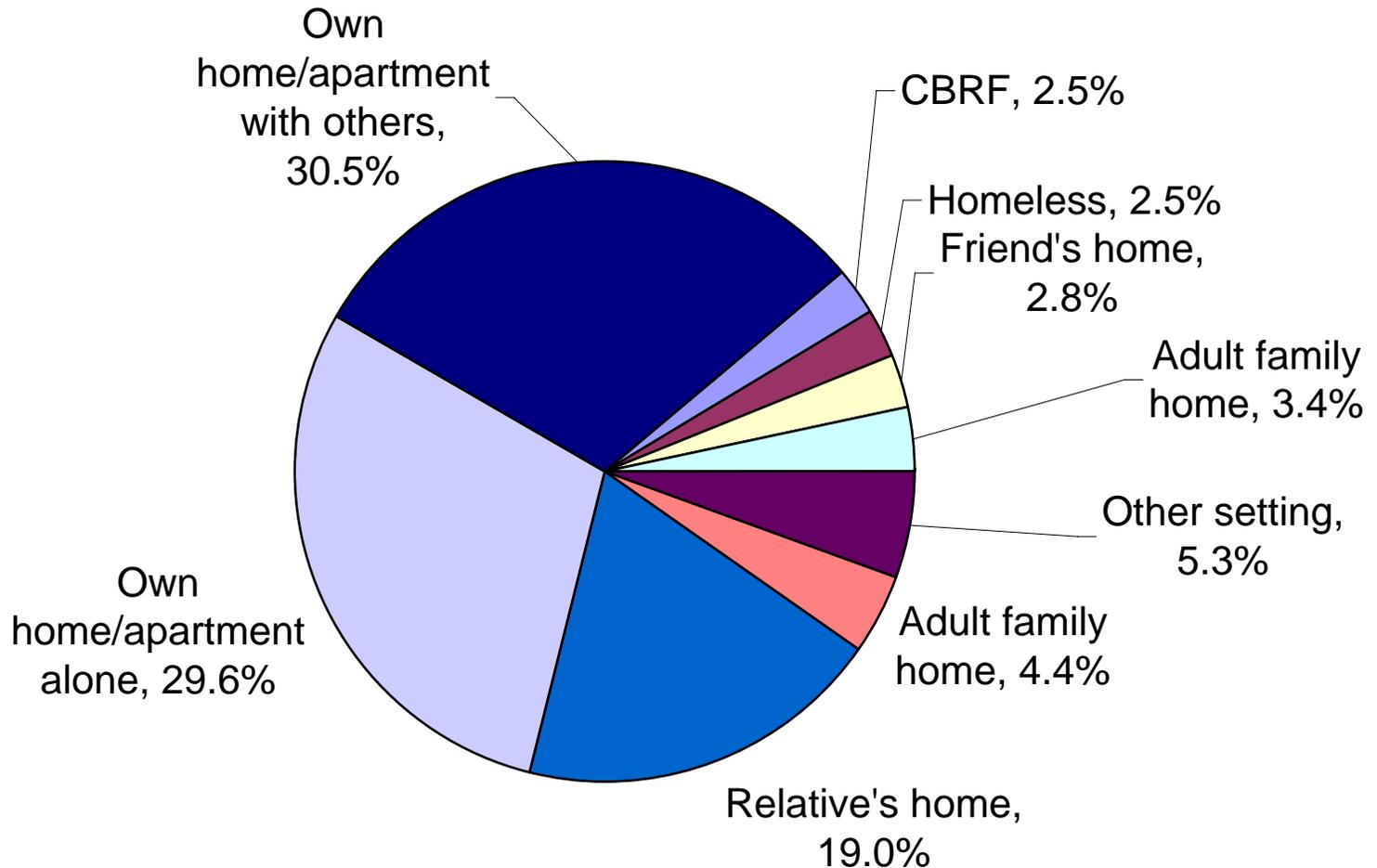
Adult at Risk's Age



Adult at Risk's Living Arrangement

	Number	Percent
Own home/apartment alone	429	29.6%
Own home/apartment with others	443	30.5%
Relative's home	275	19.0%
Friend's home	40	2.8%
Adult family home	49	3.4%
Adult family home (licensed)	64	4.4%
Nursing home	22	1.5%
Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF)	37	2.5%
Homeless	37	2.5%
Other setting	51	3.5%
Institution	4	0.3%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Adult at Risk's Living Arrangement

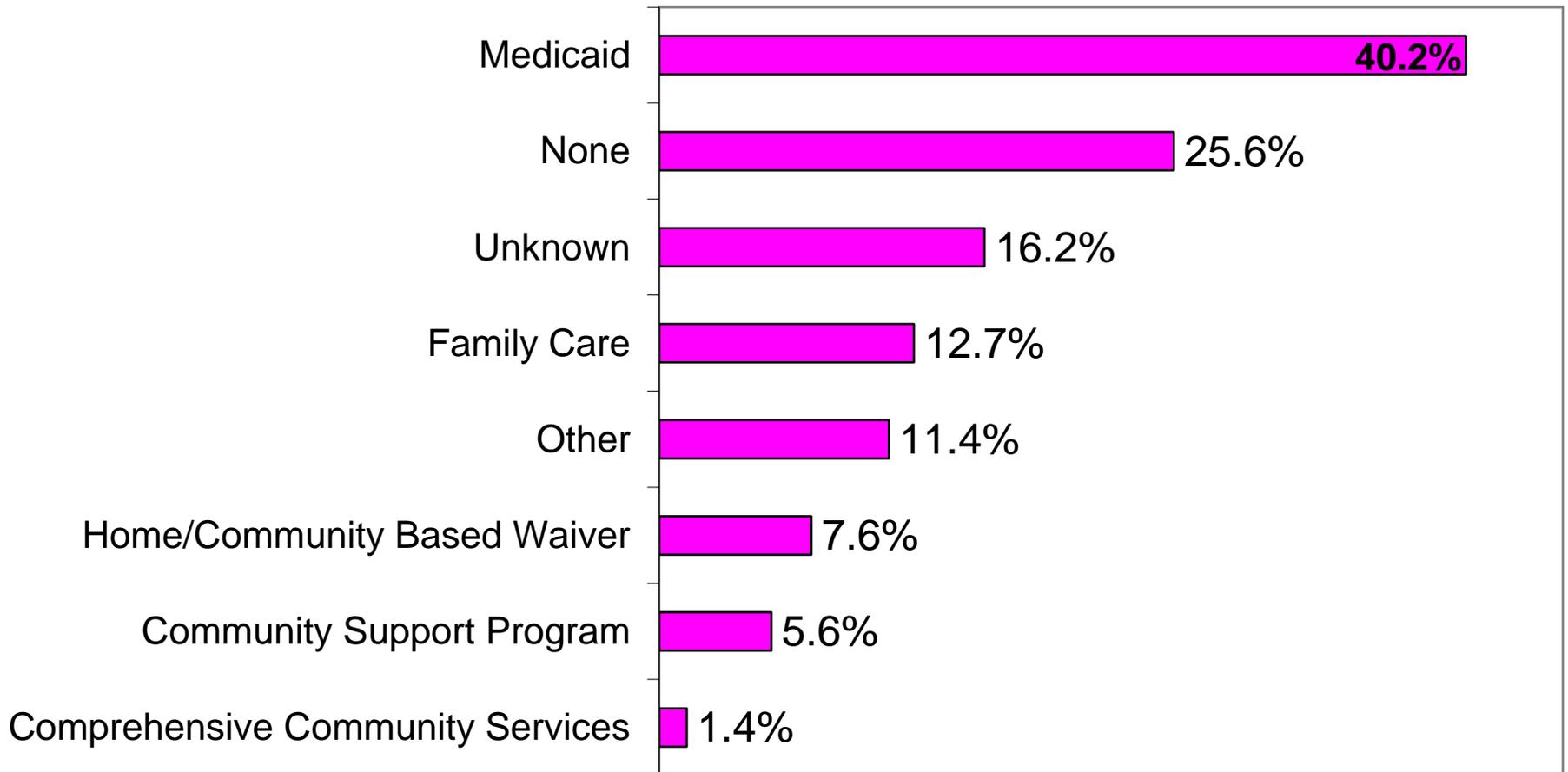


County/State Funded Programs That Have Served This Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Community Support Program	81	5.6%
Comprehensive Community Services	20	1.4%
Family Care	184	12.7%
Home and Community Based Waiver	110	7.6%
Medicaid (Title 19, Card Services)	583	40.2%
Unknown	235	16.2%
Other	166	11.4%
None	372	25.6%

Multiple responses were allowed, so percents do not total 100%.

Public Programs That Have Served This Adult at Risk



Does Adult at Risk Have a Substitute Decision-Maker?

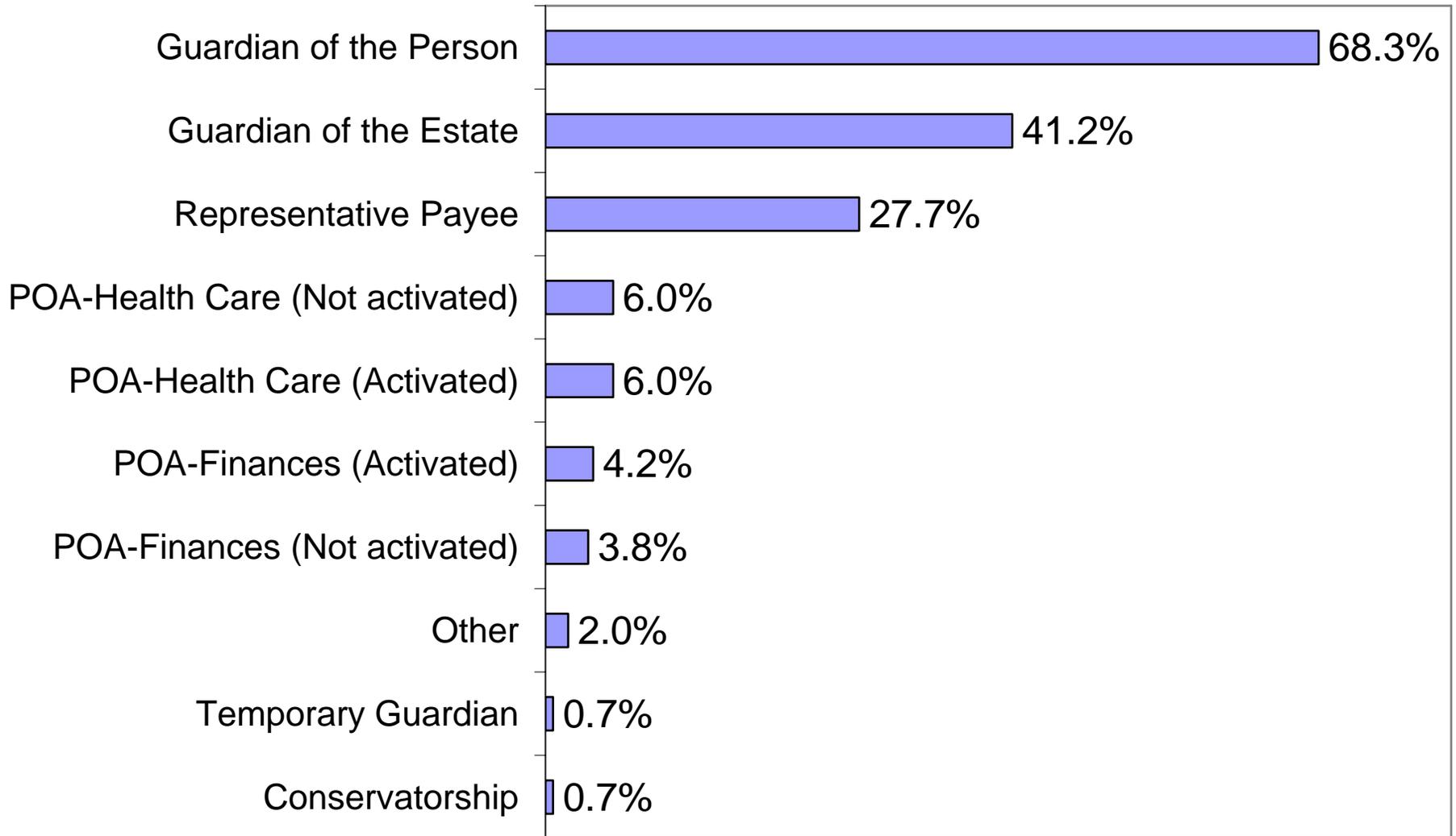
	Number	Percent
No	836	57.6%
Yes	451	31.1%
Unknown	164	11.3%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Type(s) of Substitute Decision-Maker

	Number	Percent
Conservatorship	3	0.7%
Guardian of the Person	308	68.3%
Guardian of the Estate	186	41.2%
Representative Payee	125	27.7%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Finances (Activated)	19	4.2%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Finances (Not activated)	17	3.8%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Health Care (Activated)	27	6.0%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Health Care (Not activated)	27	6.0%
Temporary Guardian	3	0.7%
Other	9	2.0%

Percents represent share of all those with any kind of substitute decision-maker (n=451). Multiple responses are allowed, so percents do not total 100%.

Type of Substitute Decision Maker



Adult at Risk's Characteristics

	Number	Percent
Adult at Risk financially dependent on alleged abuser	22	1.5%
Alcohol or drug abuse	256	17.6%
Alleged abuser financially dependent on Adult at Risk	40	2.8%
Alzheimer's or related dementia	23	1.6%
Blind/visually impaired	38	2.6%
Brain injury	111	7.6%
Challenging or dangerous behavior	112	7.7%
Communication disorder	37	2.5%
Deaf/hard of hearing	24	1.7%
Developmental disability	584	40.2%
Diabetic	117	8.1%
Disoriented/confused	56	3.9%
Functionally illiterate	30	2.1%
Homebound	51	3.5%
Incontinent	56	3.9%
Medically fragile	156	10.8%
Mental illness/Chronic mental illness	447	30.8%
Mobility impaired	143	9.9%
Morbidly obese	51	3.5%
Physically disabled	322	22.2%
Stroke-related impairments	55	3.8%
Unemployed	133	9.2%
Other medical condition	163	11.2%
Other characteristic	121	8.3%

Percents refer to share of all adults at risk having this characteristic. Multiple responses are allowed, so percents do not total 100%.

Age of Alleged Abuser(s)

	Number	Percent
Under 25 years	52	6.0%
25 to 44 years	172	19.7%
45 to 59 years	191	21.9%
60 to 79 years	98	11.2%
80 years or older	11	1.3%
Unknown	349	40.0%
Total	873	100.0%

Total includes all alleged abusers; some incidents involve more than one.

Alleged Abusers' Gender

	Number	Percent
Male	355	40.8%
Female	401	46.1%
Unknown	114	13.1%
Total	870	100.0%

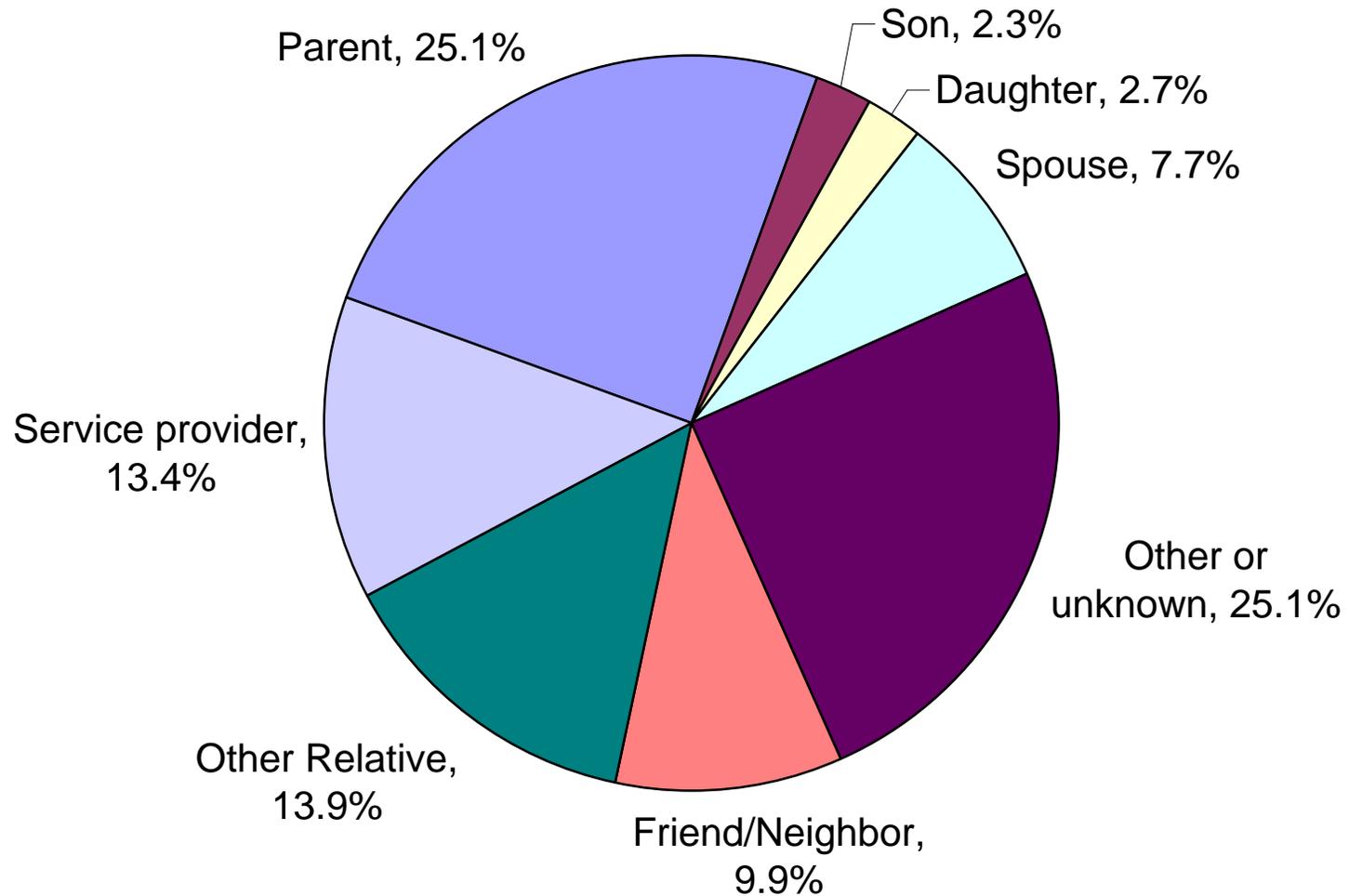
Alleged Abusers' Relationship to Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Parent	219	25.1%
Son	20	2.3%
Daughter	24	2.7%
Spouse	67	7.7%
Other or unknown	219	25.1%
Friend/Neighbor	86	9.9%
Other Relative	117	13.4%
Grandchild	4	0.5%
Service provider	117	13.4%
Total	873	100.0%

Are Alleged Abusers Caregivers?

	Number	Percent
Yes	413	47.3%
No	362	41.5%
Unknown	98	11.2%
Total	873	100.0%

Alleged Abuser's Relationship to Adult at Risk



Do Alleged Abusers Live with Adult at Risk?

	Number	Percent
Yes	440	50.5%
No	339	38.9%
Unknown	93	10.7%
Total	872	100.0%

Do Alleged Abusers Have Any Legal or Substitute Decision-Maker Status?

	Number	Percent
Any legal/substitute decision maker status listed	247	28.3%
No status listed	626	71.7%
Total	873	100.0%

Abusers' Legal Status

	Number	Percent
Conservator	1	0.1%
Guardian of the Person	126	14.4%
Guardian of the Estate	89	10.2%
Temporary Guardian	0	0.0%
Representative Payee	100	11.5%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Finances (Activated)	6	0.7%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Finances (Not activated)	2	0.2%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Health Care (Activated)	9	1.0%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Health Care (Not activated)	7	0.8%
Other legal status	18	2.1%
Unknown legal status	148	17.0%
No legal status	472	54.1%

Percents represent share of all abusers who have this legal status. Multiple responses are allowed, so percents do not total 100%.

Alleged Abusers' Characteristics

	Number	Percent
Alcohol or drug abuse	56	6.4%
Challenging/dangerous behavior	33	3.8%
Developmental disability	39	4.5%
Financial dependence: adult at risk on abuser	32	3.7%
Financial dependence: abuser on adult at risk	58	6.6%
Frail elderly	18	2.1%
Mental illness/chronic mentally illness	64	7.3%
Physical disability	21	2.4%
Unemployed	83	9.5%
Other characteristic	182	20.8%
None of the listed characteristics	432	49.5%

*Multiple responses are allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%.
Percents refer to share of all alleged abusers.*

More than One Alleged Abuser?

	Number	Percent
Yes	41	4.7%
No, one alleged abuser only	832	95.3%
Total	873	100.0%

Was Hurt or Harm Substantiated?

	Number	Percent
Substantiated	700	48.2%
Unsubstantiated	531	36.6%
Unable to Substantiate	220	15.2%
Total	1,451	100.0%

Actions Taken to Assist Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Guardian referral	120	8.3%
Investigation not accepted	70	4.8%
Mental health commitment	33	2.3%
Outreach continues	191	13.2%
Protective services placement	73	5.0%
Referral made to other agency	259	17.8%
Referral to Caregiver Misconduct Registry (DHS/DQA)	21	1.4%
Referral to law enforcement/Department of Justice	142	9.8%
Referral to protection/advocacy agencies	47	3.2%
Referral to regulatory authority (DHS/DQA)	20	1.4%
Services needed are not available	43	3.0%
Services not needed	256	17.6%
Services offered but not accepted	207	14.3%
Services offered-all accepted	180	12.4%
Services offered-some accepted	263	18.1%
Response/investigation continues	36	2.5%
Other legal action	56	3.9%
Other disposition	138	9.5%

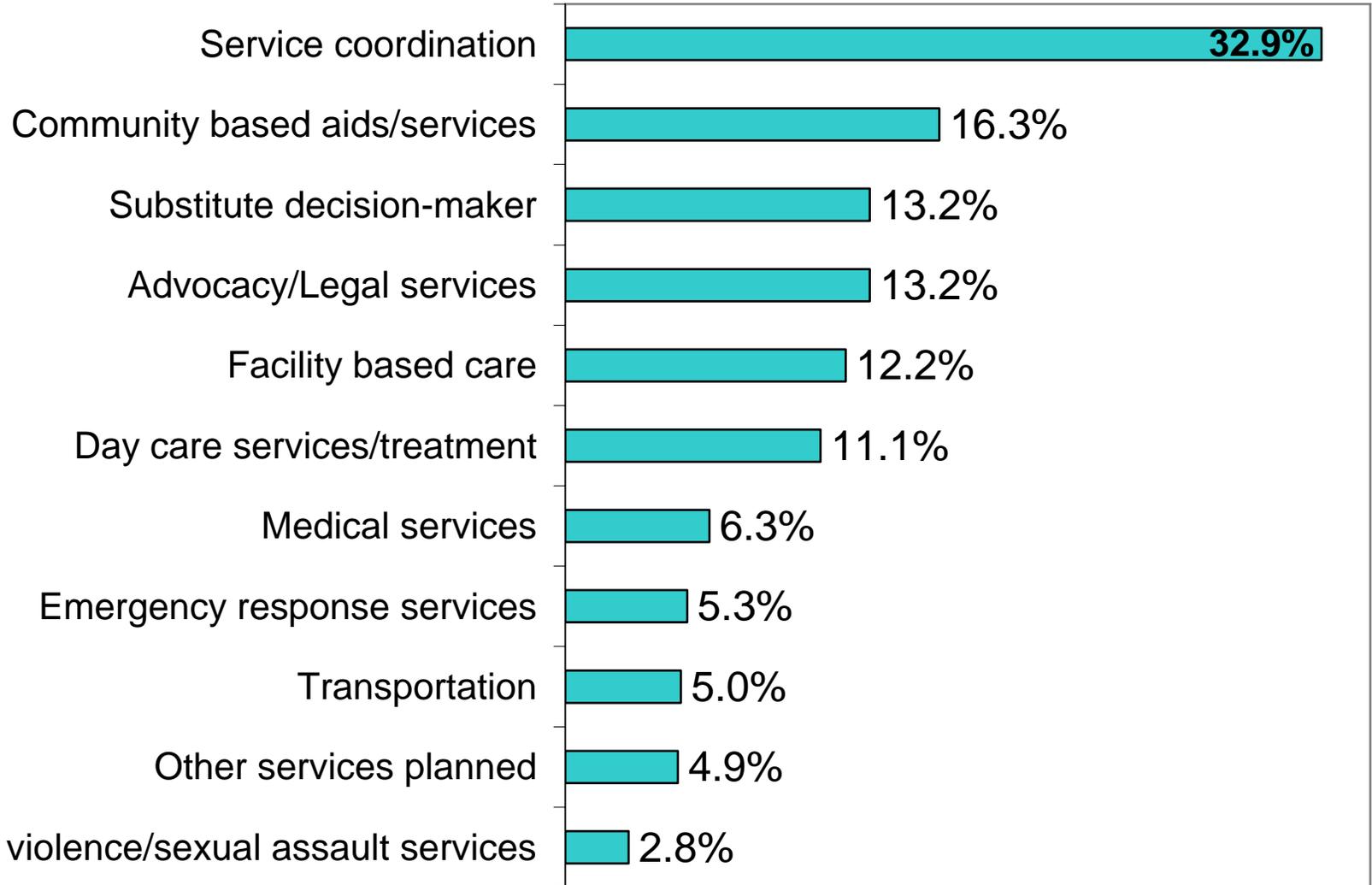
Percents refer to share of all reports showing this action. Multiple responses are allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%.

Services Planned for Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Advocacy/Legal services	192	13.2%
Community based aids/services	236	16.3%
Day care services/treatment	161	11.1%
Domestic violence/sexual assault services	40	2.8%
Emergency response services	77	5.3%
Facility based care	177	12.2%
Medical services	91	6.3%
Service coordination	477	32.9%
Substitute decision-maker	192	13.2%
Transportation	73	5.0%
Other services planned	71	4.9%

Percents refer to share of all reports showing this service planned. Multiple responses were allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%.

Services Planned for Adult at Risk

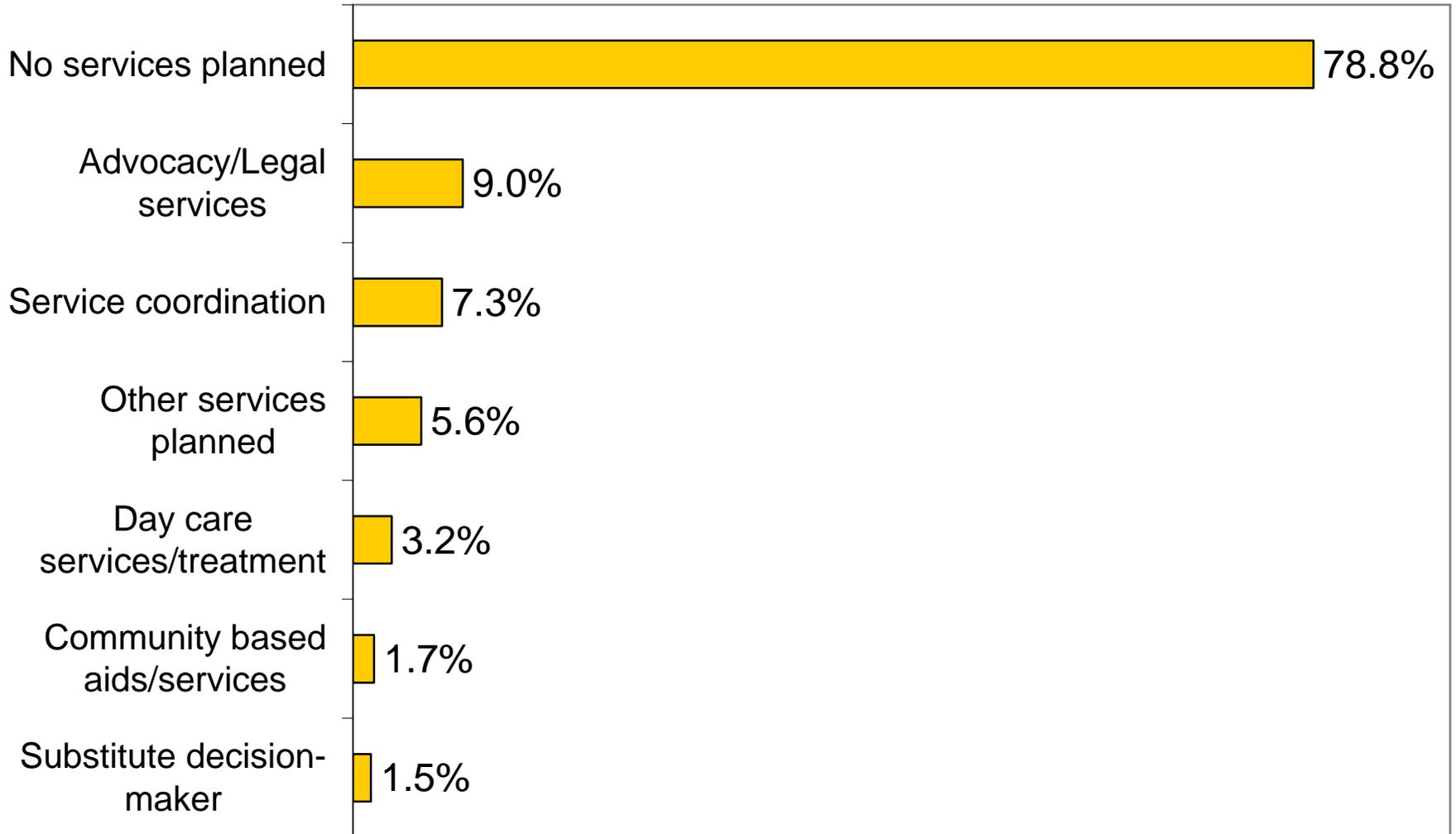


Services Planned for Alleged Abuser(s)

	Number	Percent
No services planned	594	78.8%
Advocacy/Legal services	68	9.0%
Community based aids/services	13	1.7%
Day care services/treatment	24	3.2%
Service coordination	55	7.3%
Substitute decision-maker	11	1.5%
Other services planned	42	5.6%

*Multiple responses are allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%.
Percents refer to share of all incidents in which abuse or neglect was*

Services Planned for Alleged Abuser(s)



Contact Information

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