

Wisconsin's Annual Elder Abuse and Neglect Report: 2006

*A statewide summary of reports
submitted by Wisconsin counties*

P-00124 (08/2007)

Introduction: The Annual Elder Abuse and Neglect Report

In Wisconsin, county agencies receive elder 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 elder persons and help ensure their safety.

After responding to an incident, county agencies file an incident report with the Department of Health and Family Services, using the web-based Wisconsin Incident Tracking System (WITS). A compilation of all county incident reports from 2006 are the basis of this statewide Annual Elder Abuse and Neglect Report.

New Reporting System

In September, 2006, DHFS rolled out the Wisconsin Incident Tracking System (WITS), a web-based application county agencies use in reporting their responses to incidents of elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation. In addition to collecting all the information previously submitted to DHFS on paper forms, WITS collects new information on clients' substitute decision makers, home and community-based waiver participation, and other topics.

Because the software was provided late in the reporting year, county workers began the year collecting information on paper forms and later transcribed them into WITS. For incidents that took place before WITS was available, workers may not have had information about substitute decision makers, waiver participation, etc.

Thus, the 2006 report is missing some information on these topics, and you will note frequent use of "unknown" as an answer to some of the new questions. Reports will be more complete in future years as WITS becomes the standard for data collection.

More Changes Ahead

Effective December 1, 2006, the laws regarding reporting of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation changed to create consistent reporting requirements for adults of all ages. The provisions to ensure the safety of older adults now extend to adults at risk of all ages. For more information about the new laws and their implications for response and reporting, use the link to the August, 2006 issue of Wisconsin Lawyer on the DHFS Adult at Risk webpage:

<http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/aps/Links.htm>

Beginning in Fall, 2007, county adult-at-risk agencies will be able to use WITS to report on incidents of all abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation involving adults age 18 and over, not only those age 60+.

DHFS will continue to provide separate annual reports on incidents of elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation, and on incidents involving younger adults at risk.

Growing Awareness of Elder Abuse

A total of 4,372 cases of suspected abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation were reported in 2006, an increase of 3.3 percent from 2005. Tragically, 24 were fatal and another 260 were considered life-threatening. About one in 11 incidents (6.5%) involved a life-threatening or fatal situation.

The increased number of reported incidents signals better communication between law enforcement, health care professionals and social services agencies, which leads to more people recognizing signs of abuse and helping to ensure the safety of our older residents.

This report documents reported elder abuse incidents in Wisconsin, and provides information about the types of incidents reported, characteristics of the victims and abusers, and local responses which guide the State's efforts to prevent abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

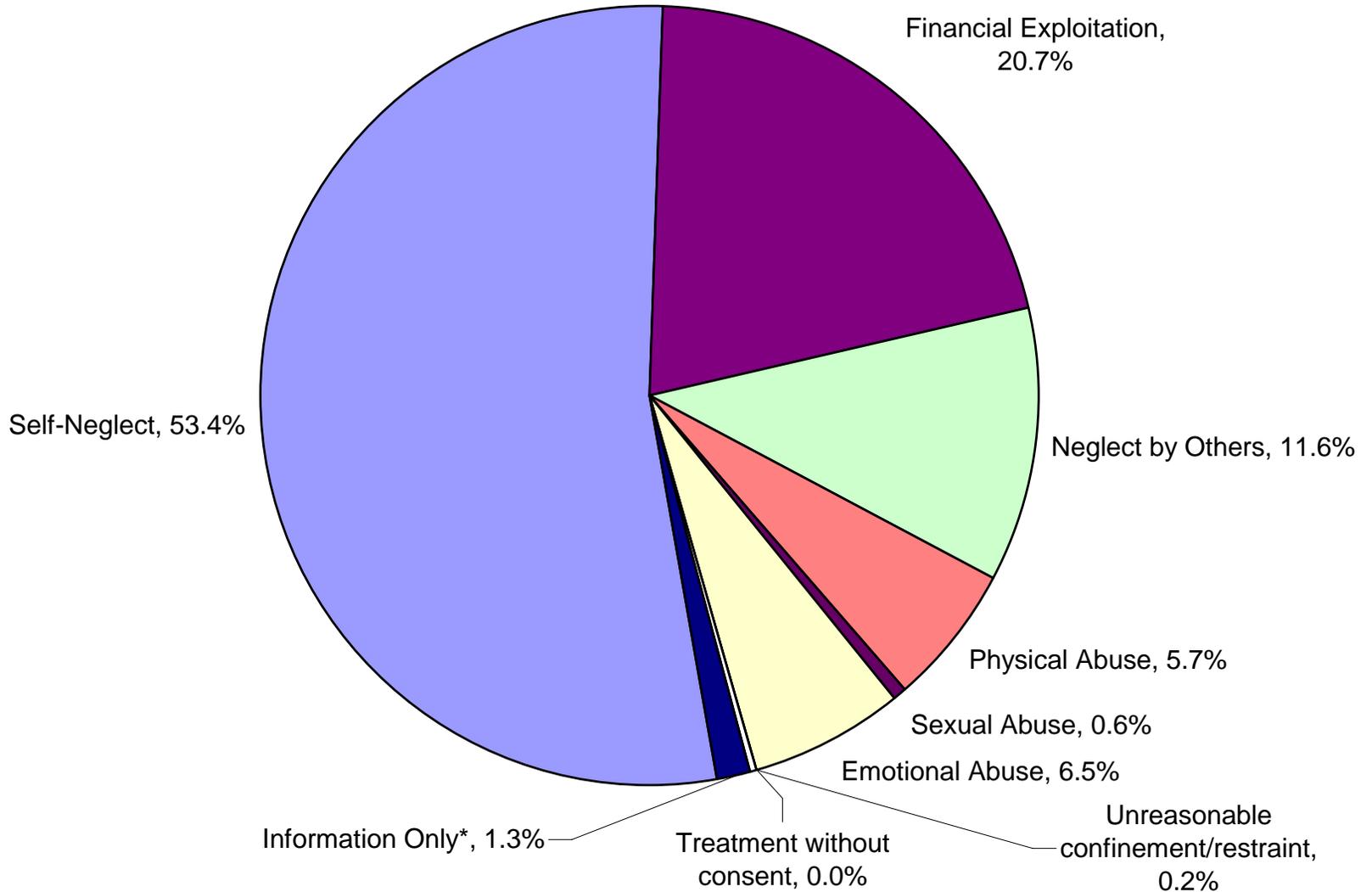
Primary Reason for Call

Type of abuse	Number	Percent of Incidents
Self-Neglect	2367	53.4%
Financial Exploitation	917	20.7%
Neglect by Others	512	11.6%
Physical Abuse	252	5.7%
Sexual Abuse	27	0.6%
Emotional Abuse	287	6.5%
Treatment without consent	1	0.0%
Unreasonable confinement/restraint	9	0.2%
<i>Calls requesting information only*</i>	59	1.3%
Total	4431	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.*

NOTE: This table includes several response options that are new to county workers and were not available on the data collection forms used for most of 2006. Thus, workers had not collected information about sexual abuse, treatment without consent, or unreasonable confinement or restraint for 2006. In future years, more complete information will be available about incidents involving these types of abuse.

Primary Reason for Call



Previous report on this individual?

	Number	Percent
Yes	1344	31.0%
No	2865	66.0%
Unknown*	129	3.0%
Total	4338	100.0%

** In addition, 35 reports were missing this information.*

Location of Incident

	Number	Percent
At or near place of residence	4020	91.9%
Other place	352	8.1%
Total	4372	100.0%

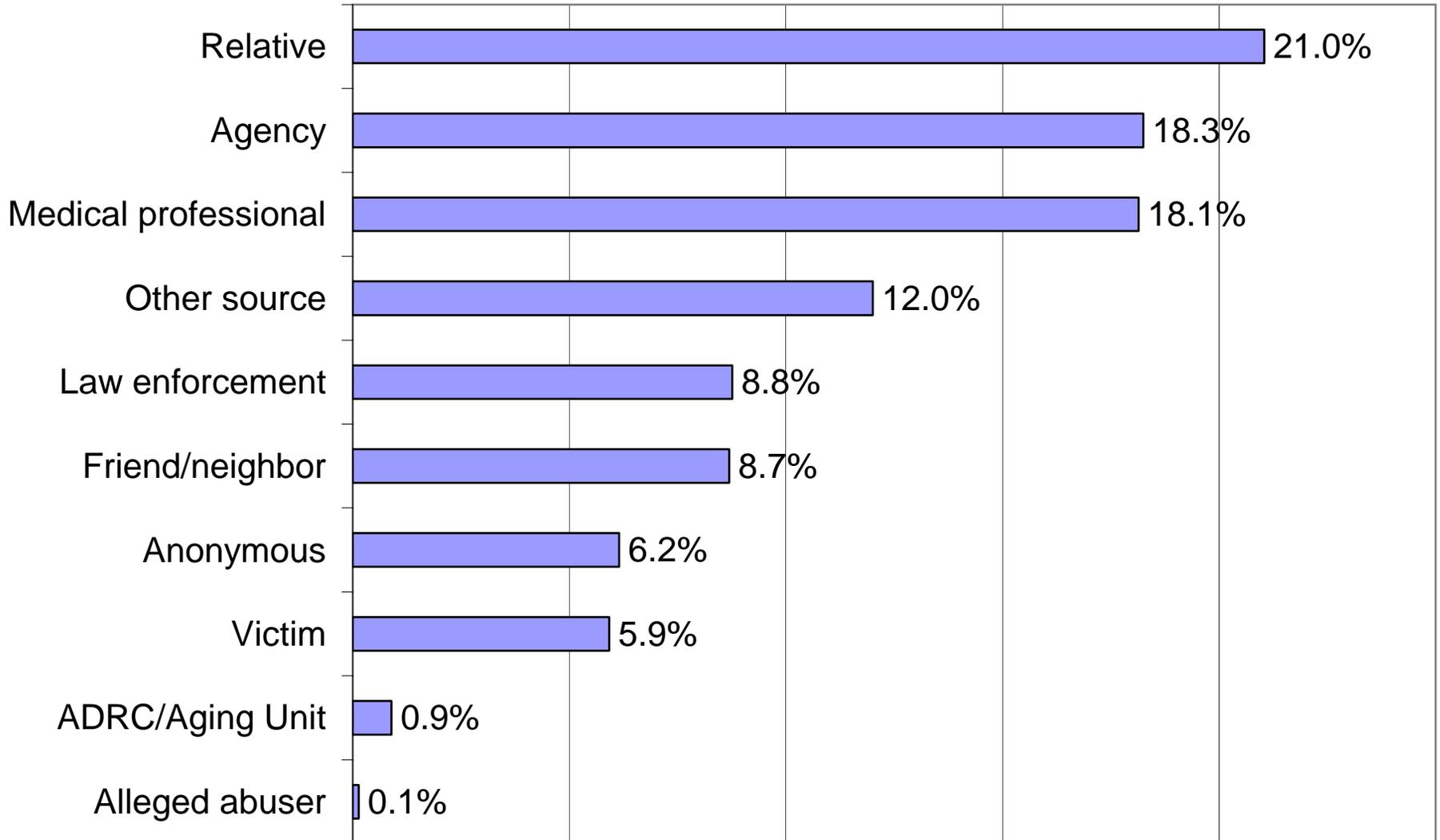
Life-Threatening and Fatal Incidents

	Number	Percent
Life-Threatening Incidents	284	6.5%
Fatal Incidents	24	0.5%
<i>Fatalities as percent of life-threatening incidents</i>		8.5%

Referral Source

Source	Number	Percent
ADRC/Aging Unit	39	0.9%
Agency	798	18.3%
Alleged abuser	6	0.1%
Anonymous	269	6.2%
Friend/neighbor	380	8.7%
Law enforcement	383	8.8%
Medical professional	793	18.1%
Relative	920	21.0%
Victim	259	5.9%
Other source	525	12.0%
Total	4372	100.0%

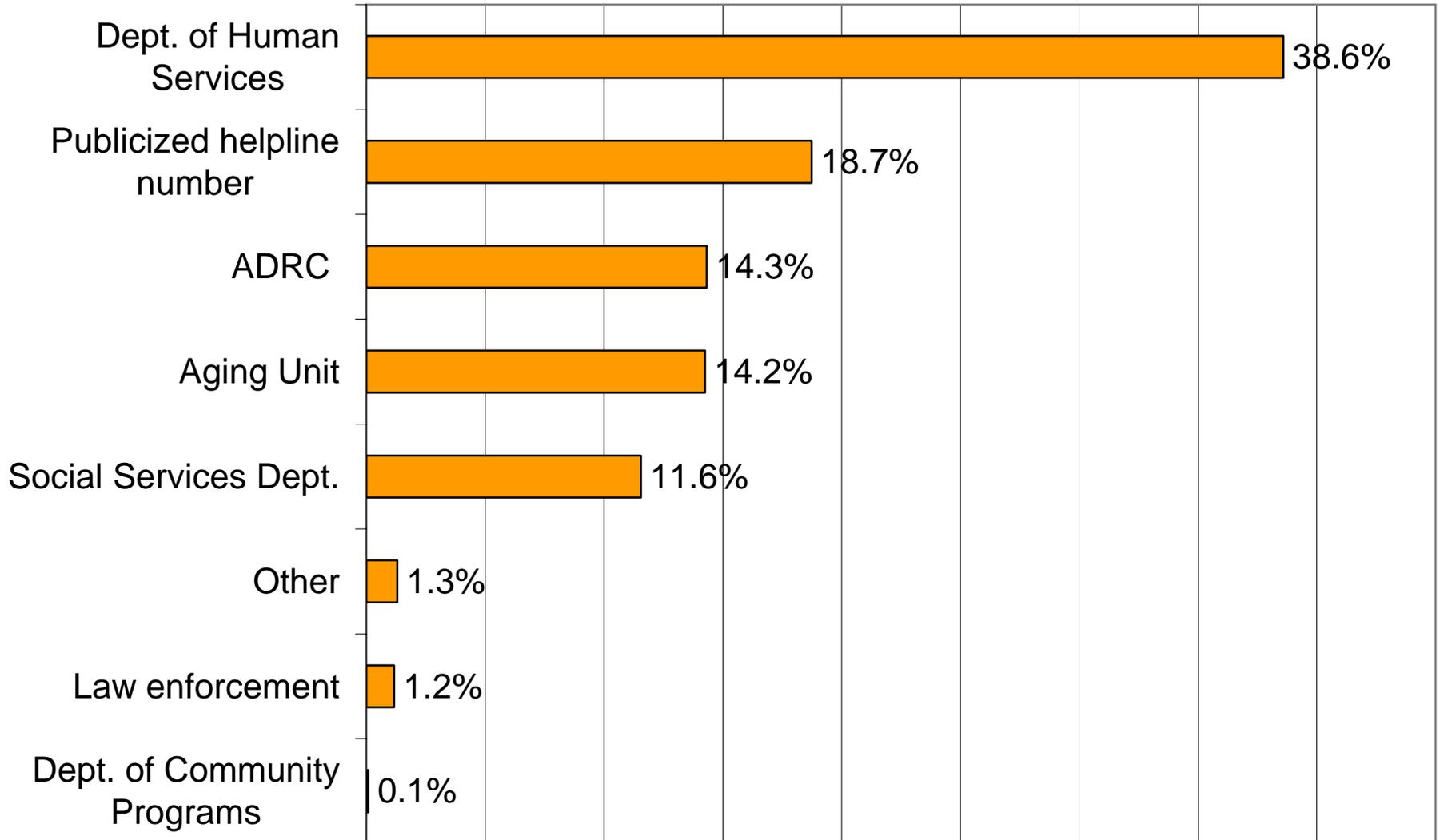
Referral Source



Call Received By...

	Number	Percent
ADRC	626	14.3%
Aging Unit	623	14.2%
Dept. of Community Programs (51.42/437)	4	0.1%
Dept. of Human Services	1687	38.6%
Law enforcement	51	1.2%
Publicized helpline number	819	18.7%
Social Services Dept.	505	11.6%
Other	57	1.3%
Total	4372	100.0%

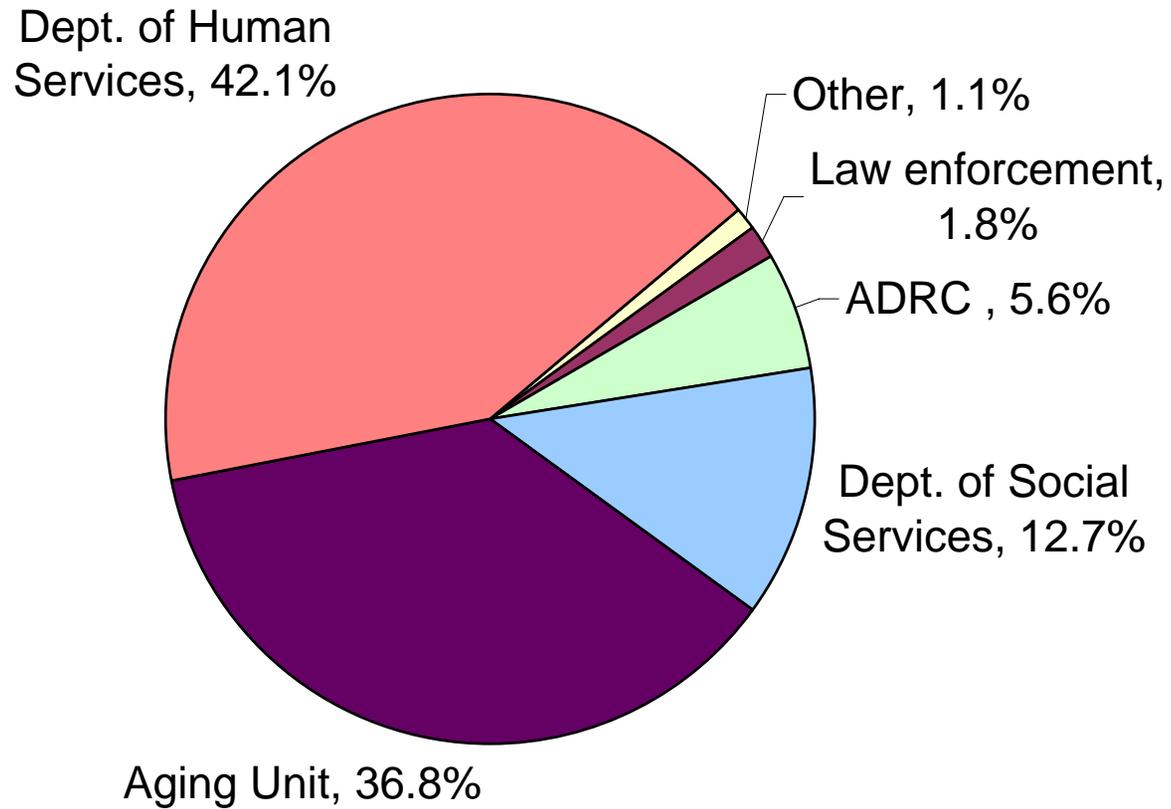
Call Received By...



Initial Response and/or Investigating Agency

Item	Number	Percent
ADRC	246	5.6%
Aging Unit	1608	36.8%
Animal Control/Humane Society	2	0.0%
BOALTC/Ombudsman	2	0.0%
Dept. of Community Programs (51.42/437)	3	0.1%
Dept. of Human Services	1839	42.1%
Dept. of Justice	1	0.0%
Dept. of Public Health	7	0.2%
Dept. of Social Services	554	12.7%
DQA/Licensing and Regulation	3	0.1%
Housing inspection/zoning	4	0.1%
Law enforcement	77	1.8%
Other	26	0.6%
Total	4372	100.0%

Initial Response and/or Investigating Agency

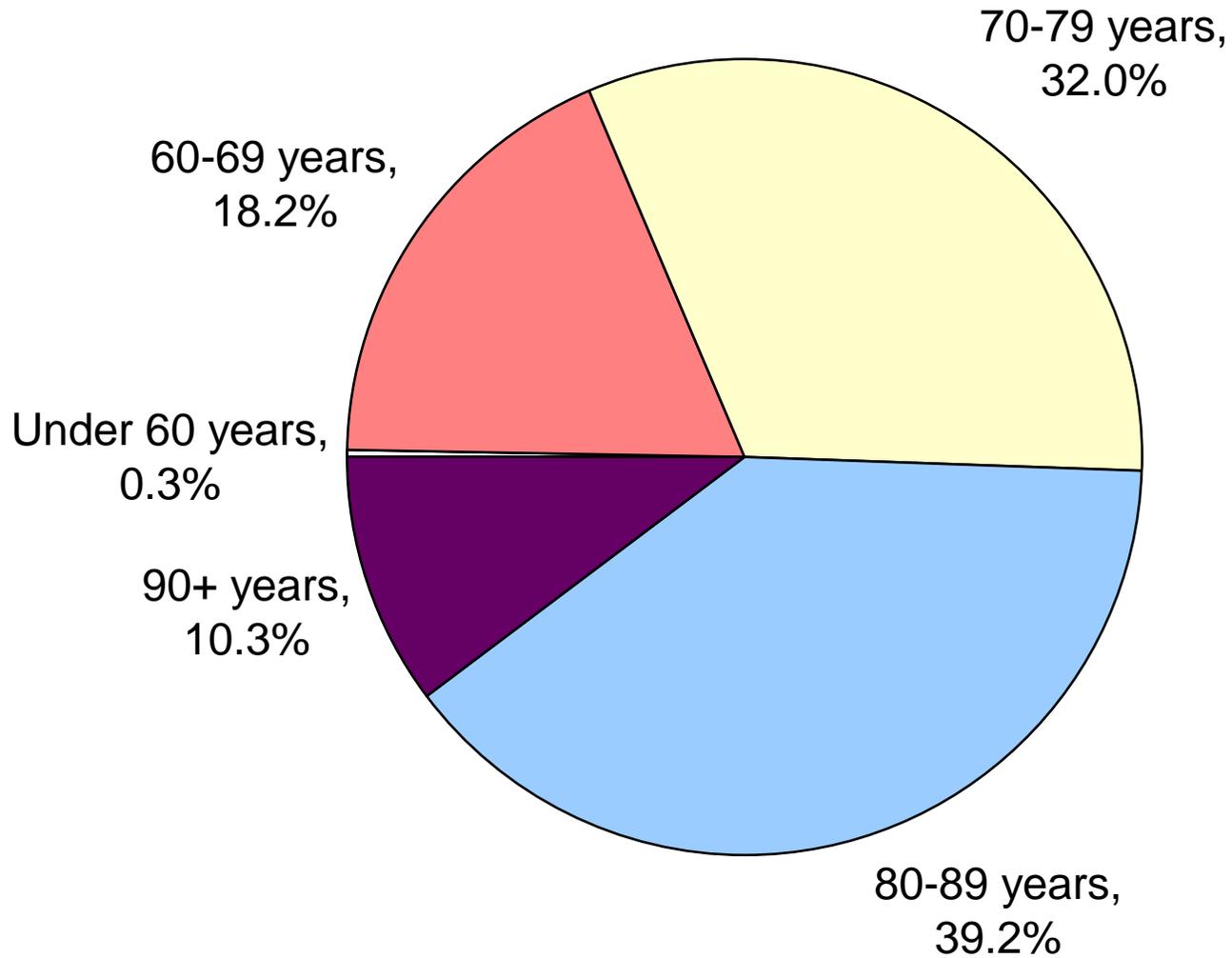


Age of Elder Person

Age	Number	Percent
Under 60 years	15	0.3%
60-69 years	794	18.2%
70-79 years	1400	32.0%
80-89 years	1714	39.2%
90+ years	449	10.3%
Total	4372	100.0%

Note: The small number of individuals under 60 years of age are all in their 50s and have health or disabling conditions considered "infirmities of aging."

Elder Person's Age



Elder Person's Gender

	Number	Percent
Male	1542	35.3%
Female	2825	64.7%
Total	4367	100.0%

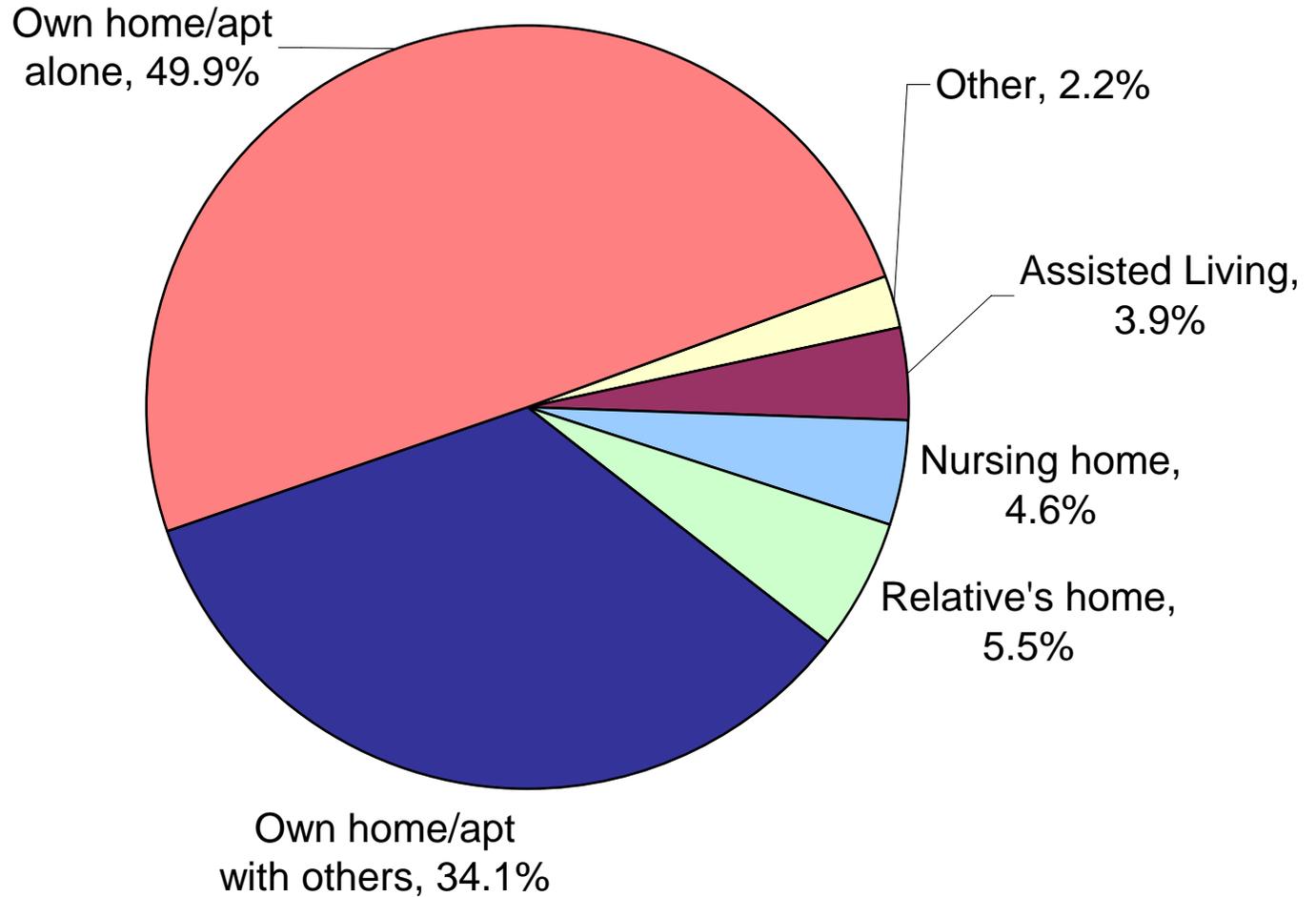
Elder Person's Race

Age	Number	Percent
White	3765	86.1%
Black/African American	327	7.5%
Native American/Alaska Native	63	1.4%
Asian	13	0.3%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	0.0%
Other race	22	0.5%
Not reported or unknown	181	4.1%
Total	4372	100.0%

Elder Person's Living Arrangement

	Number	Percent
Adult family home	20	0.5%
Adult family home/Licensed	7	0.2%
CBRF	126	2.9%
Friend's home	37	0.8%
Homeless	20	0.5%
Nursing home	200	4.6%
Own home/apt alone	2180	49.9%
Own home/apt with others	1490	34.1%
RCAC	16	0.4%
Relative's home	239	5.5%
Other	37	0.8%
Total	4372	100.0%

Elder Person's Living Arrangement



Waiver Participant?

	Number	Percent
Yes	220	5.0%
No	2629	60.1%
Unknown	1523	34.8%
Total	4372	100.0%

Note: Prior to the release of WITS in September, 2006 workers did not collect information about the elder person's waiver participation. Thus, for many 2006 incident reports this status is "unknown."

Is there a substitute decision maker?

	Number	Percent
Yes	556	12.7%
No	3369	77.1%
Unknown	447	10.2%
Total	4372	100.0%

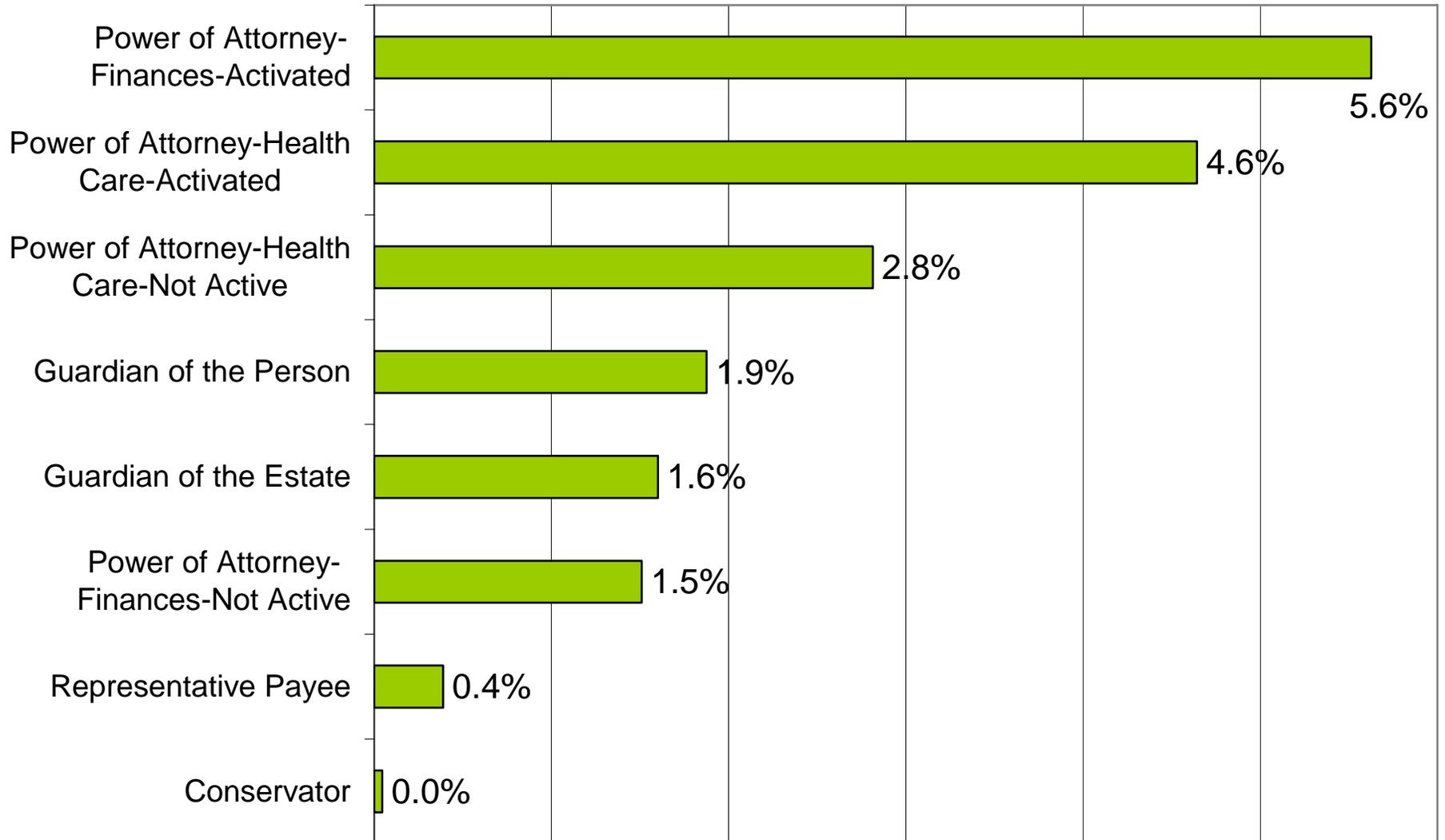
Note: Prior to the release of WITS in September, 2006 workers did not collect substitute decision-maker information in this way. Thus, for many 2006 incident reports this information is "unknown."

Type of Substitute Decision Maker

	Number	Percent
Guardian of the Person	82	1.9%
Guardian of the Estate	70	1.6%
Representative Payee	17	0.4%
Power of Attorney-Finances-Activated	246	5.6%
Power of Attorney-Finances-Not Active	66	1.5%
Power of Attorney-Health Care-Activated	203	4.6%
Power of Attorney-Health Care-Not Active	123	2.8%
Conservator	2	0.0%

Note: Multiple responses were allowed. Percents represent share of all incidents showing this type of substitute decision-maker.

Type of Substitute Decision-Maker

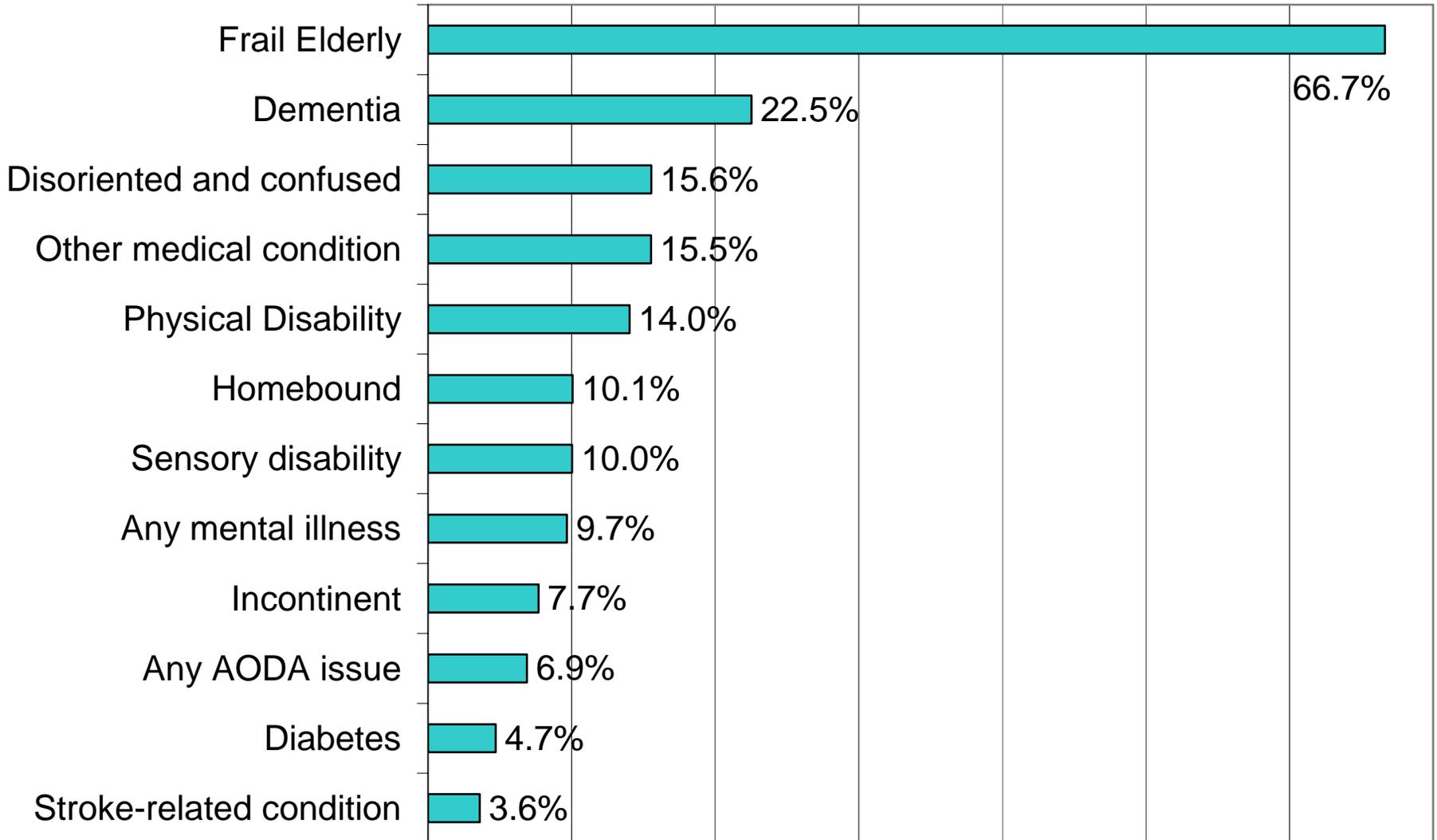


Elder Person's Characteristics

	Number	Percent
Frail Elderly	2914	66.7%
Dementia	985	22.5%
Disoriented and confused	680	15.6%
Developmental Disability	66	1.5%
Physical Disability	614	14.0%
Medical Condition (other)	679	15.5%
Mental Illness (mentally ill)	267	6.1%
Chronic mental illness	170	3.9%
Diabetes	206	4.7%
Morbidly Obese	42	1.0%
Homebound	440	10.1%
Incontinent	337	7.7%
Alcohol abuse	213	4.9%
Chronic alcoholic	90	2.1%
Drug abuse	29	0.7%
Blind/visually impaired	179	4.1%
Deaf/hard of hearing	305	7.0%
Stroke-related condition	158	3.6%
Functionally illiterate	33	0.8%
None of the listed characteristics	237	5.4%

Note: Multiple responses were allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%

Elder Person's Characteristics



Age of Alleged Abuser(s)

Age	Number	Percent
Unknown	126	n/a
Under 25 years	98	4.50%
25 to 44 years	604	27.74%
45 to 59 years	885	40.65%
60 to 79 years	429	19.71%
80 years or older	161	7.40%
Note: Abusers with unknown ages are excluded from these percents.		
Total	2,177	100.0%

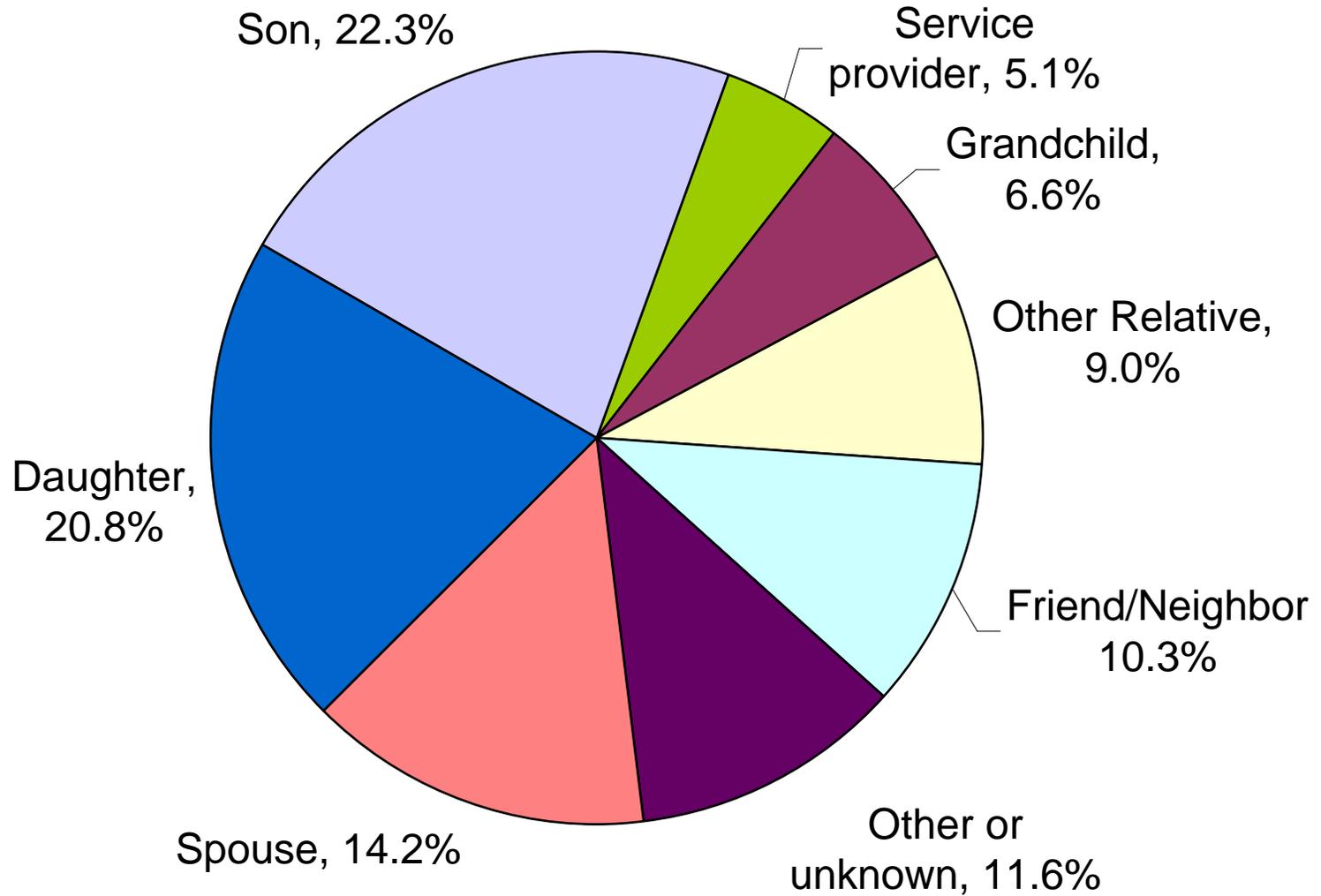
Alleged Abusers' Gender

	Number	Percent
Male	1141	49.5%
Female	1062	46.1%
Unknown	100	4.3%
Total	2303	100.0%

Alleged Abusers' Relationships to Elder Person

	Number	Percent
Spouse	328	14.2%
Son	514	22.3%
Daughter	480	20.8%
Sibling	31	1.3%
Grandchild	153	6.6%
Other Relative	175	7.6%
Friend/Neighbor	237	10.3%
Home agency or facility staff	11	0.5%
Other service provider	106	4.6%
Other	178	7.7%
Unknown	90	3.9%
Total	2303	100.0%

Alleged Abuser's Relationship



Are Alleged Abusers Caregivers?

	Number	Percent
Yes	1058	45.9%
No	1124	48.8%
Unknown	121	5.3%
Total	2303	100.0%

Do Alleged Abusers Live with Elder Person?

	Number	Percent
Yes	1098	47.7%
No	1119	48.6%
Unknown	86	3.7%
Total	2303	100.0%

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

	Number	Percent
Any legal/subs dec maker status listed	792	34.4%
No status listed	1511	65.6%
Total	2303	100.0%

Alleged Abusers' Characteristics

	Number	Percent
Frail Elderly	156	6.8%
Dementia	42	1.8%
Disoriented and confused	26	1.1%
Developmental Disability	21	0.9%
Physical Disability	51	2.2%
Medical Condition (other)	62	2.7%
Mental Illness (mentally ill)	93	4.0%
Chronic mental illness	49	2.1%
Diabetes	14	0.6%
Morbidly Obese	16	0.7%
Homebound	16	0.7%
Incontinent	4	0.2%
Alcohol abuse	177	7.7%
Chronic alcoholic	50	2.2%
Drug abuse	143	6.2%
Blind/visually impaired	4	0.2%
Deaf/hard of hearing	17	0.7%
Stroke-related condition	3	0.1%
Functionally illiterate	4	0.2%
Financially dependent on elder	304	13.2%
Unemployed	238	10.3%
None of the listed characteristics	1255	54.5%

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

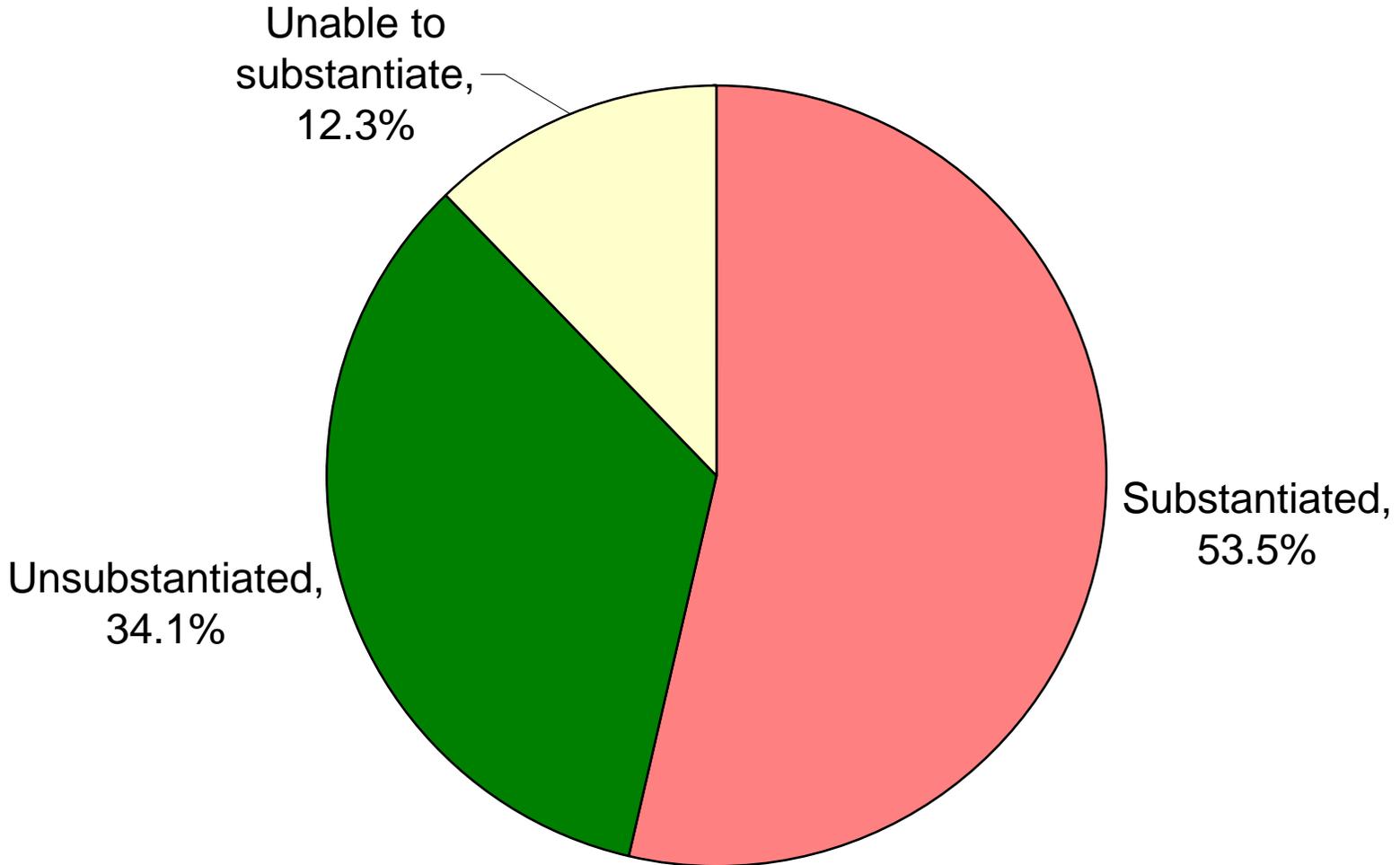
More than One Alleged Abuser?

	Number	Percent
Yes	171	3.9%
No	4201	96.1%
Total	4372	100.0%

Was Hurt or Harm Substantiated?

	Number	Percent
Substantiated	2338	53.5%
Unsubstantiated	1493	34.1%
Unable to substantiate	538	12.3%
Missing answer	3	0.1%
Total	4372	100.0%

Was Hurt or Harm Substantiated?

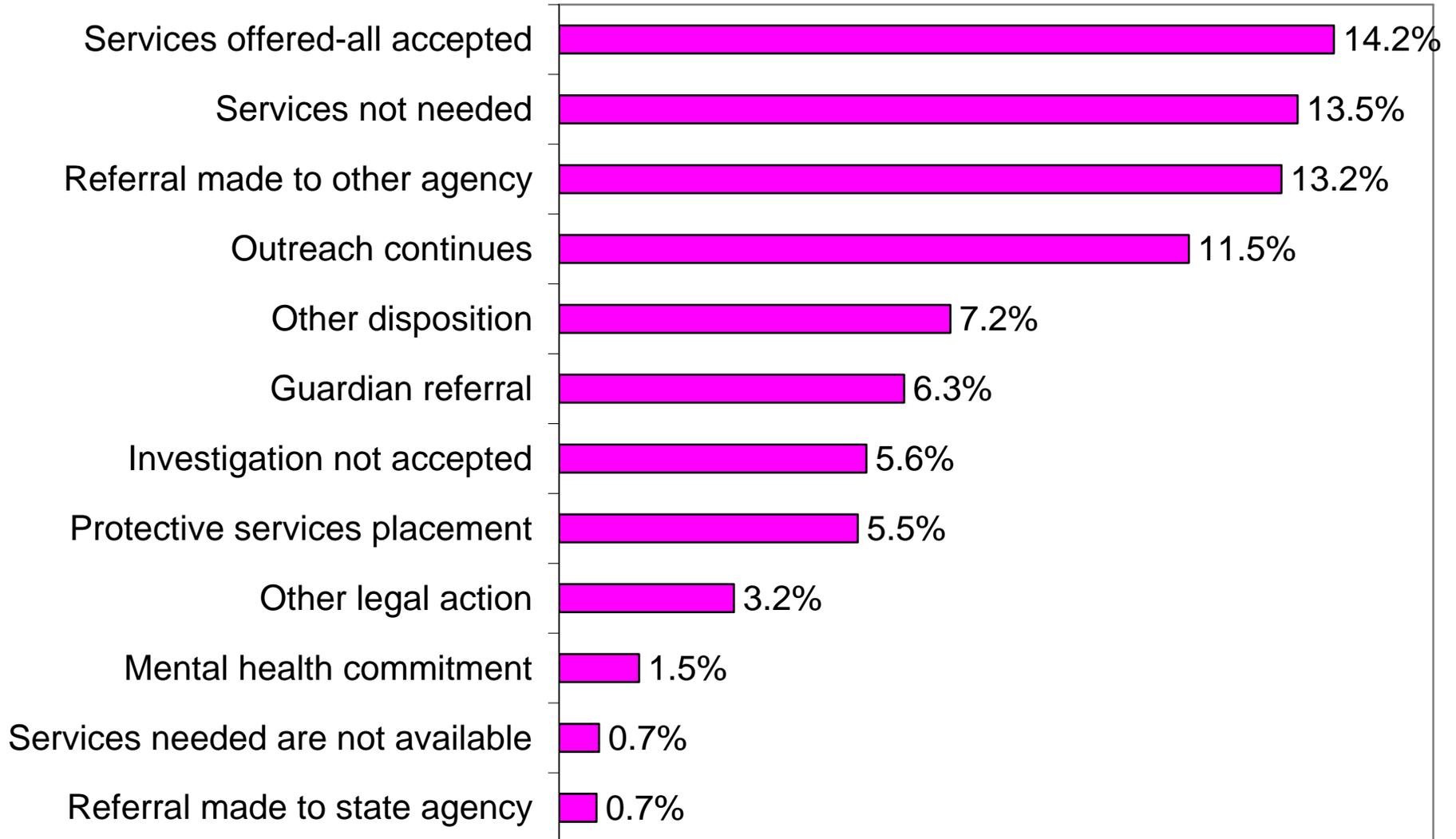


Actions Taken

Action	Number	Percent
Guardian referral	276	6.3%
Investigation not accepted	246	5.6%
Mental health commitment	64	1.5%
Outreach continues	504	11.5%
Protective services placement	239	5.5%
Referral made to other agency	578	13.2%
Referral made to state agency	30	0.7%
Services needed are not available	32	0.7%
Services not needed	591	13.5%
Services offered but not accepted	870	19.9%
Services offered-all accepted	620	14.2%
Services offered-some accepted	1161	26.6%
Other legal action	140	3.2%
Other disposition	313	7.2%

Note: Multiple responses were allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%

Actions Taken

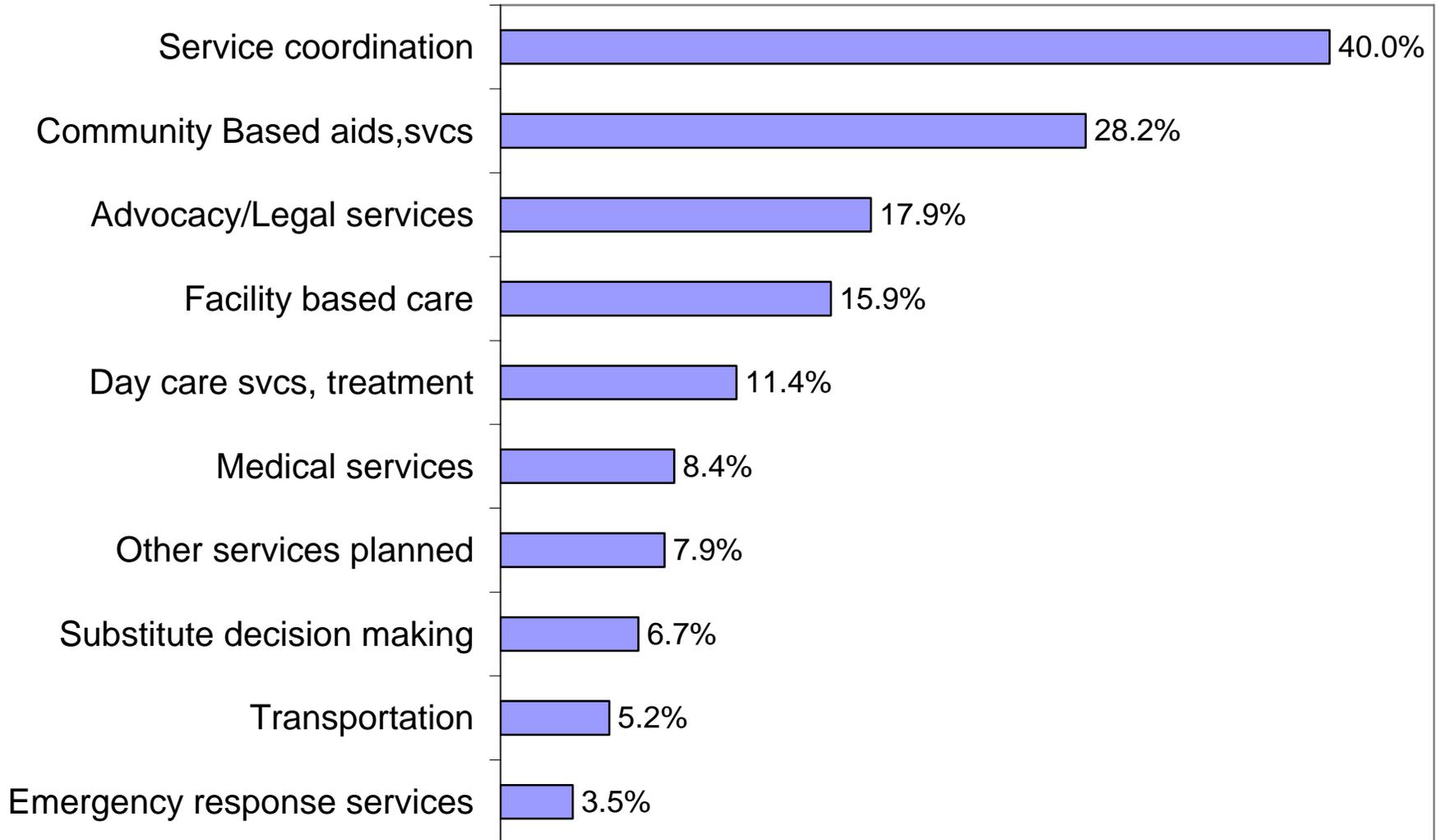


Services Planned for Elder Person

Service	Number	Percent
Advocacy/Legal services	781	17.9%
Community Based aids,svcs	1233	28.2%
Day care svcs, treatment	497	11.4%
Domestic violence/assault victim services	40	0.9%
Emergency response services	152	3.5%
Facility based care	696	15.9%
Medical services	366	8.4%
Service coordination	1748	40.0%
Substitute decision making	291	6.7%
Transportation	229	5.2%
Other services planned	306	7.0%

Note: Multiple responses were allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%

Services Planned for Elder Person

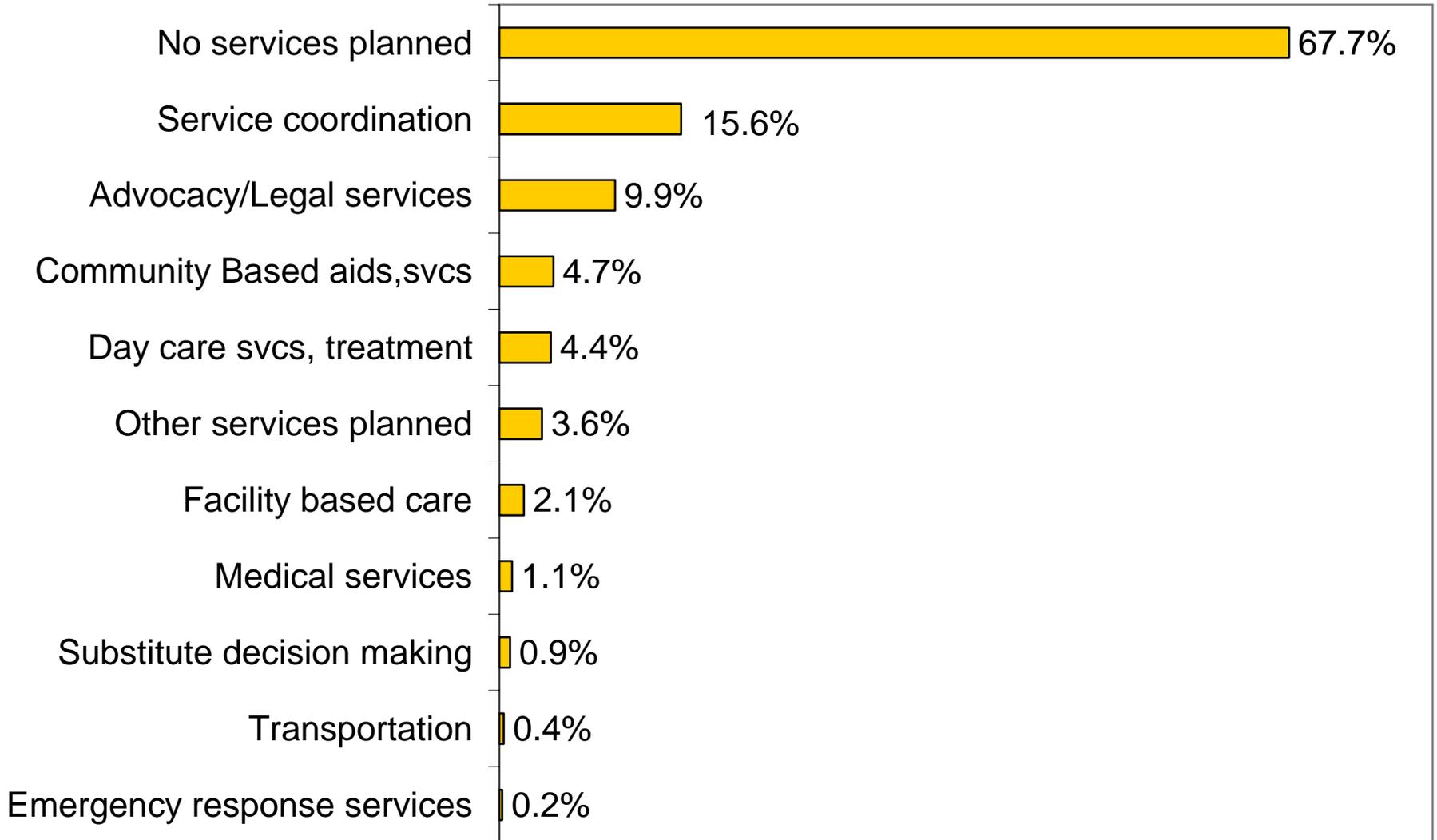


Services Planned for Alleged Abuser(s)

Service	Number	Percent
Advocacy/Legal services	207	9.9%
Community Based aids,svcs	97	4.7%
Day care svcs, treatment	92	4.4%
Domestic violence/assault victim services	1	0.0%
Emergency response services	5	0.2%
Facility based care	44	2.1%
Medical services	23	1.1%
No services planned	1412	67.7%
Service coordination	325	15.6%
Substitute decision making	19	0.9%
Transportation	8	0.4%
Other services planned	76	3.6%

Note: Multiple responses were allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%. Percents refer to share of all incidents in which abuse was alleged.

Services Planned for Abuser(s)



Contact Information

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