



Wisconsin's Annual Report on Abuse, Neglect, and Financial Exploitation of Adults at Risk: 2022

A statewide summary of reports
submitted by Wisconsin counties

P-00123-22 (07/2023)



Introduction: The Annual Adults at Risk Report

County agencies in Wisconsin receive abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation referrals and determine whether a situation of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation exists. They create 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 2022 are the basis of this statewide report: *Wisconsin's Annual Report on Abuse, Neglect, and Financial Exploitation of Adults at Risk*.



Introduction: The Annual Adults at Risk 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.

The majority of the adults at risk included in this report are community-dwelling. Allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of individuals living in licensed facilities are generally addressed through the Department of Health Services (DHS), Division of Quality Assurance (DQA), Office of Caregiver Quality.



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 and 59 years.
 - who has any physical or mental impairment that substantially restricts his or her ability to care for his or her needs.
 - who has experienced or is at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- An adult at risk *does not* require membership in a categorical group such as those with developmental disabilities, a degenerative brain disorder, a serious and persistent mental illness, or other like incapacities.



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 know that you are concerned about them and that they are not alone; there are others who do understand and are there to help them stay safe.

Call your County Help Line if you need to talk to someone about suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an adult at risk (ages 18-59).

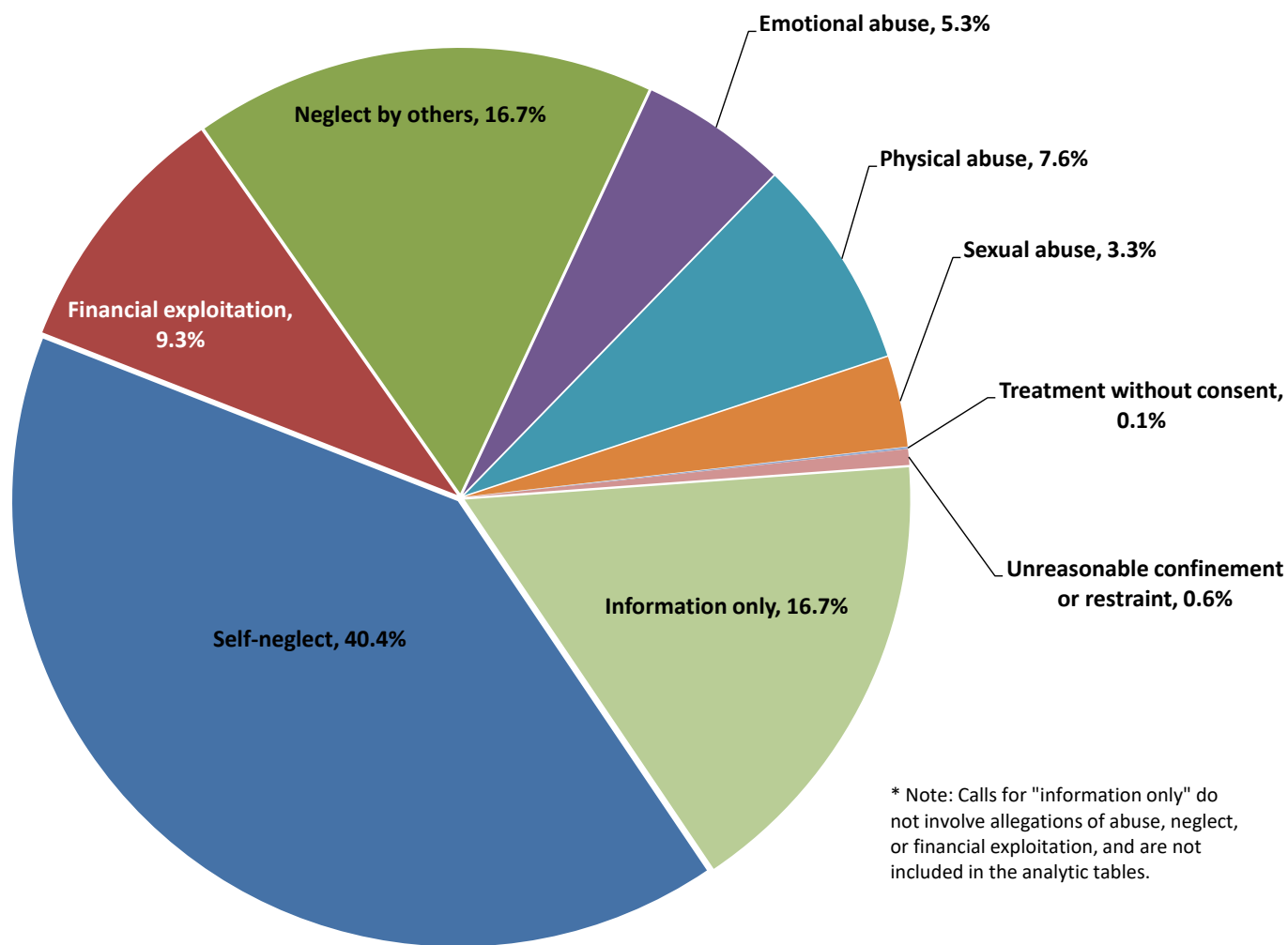
See <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/aps/Contacts/aaragencies.htm> for these help line phone numbers.



Primary Reason for Call/Issue Identified		
	Number	Percent
Self-neglect	1,131	40.4%
Financial exploitation	261	9.3%
Neglect by others	467	16.7%
Emotional abuse	149	5.3%
Physical abuse	214	7.6%
Sexual abuse	92	3.3%
Treatment without consent	2	0.1%
Unreasonable confinement or restraint	16	0.6%
Information only	468	16.7%
Total	2,800	100.0%
<i>* Note: Calls for "information only" do not involve allegations of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation, and are not included in the analytic tables.</i>		



Primary Issue Identified





Previous Report on This Individual?

	Number	Percent
No	1,361	58.4%
Yes	731	31.3%
Unknown	240	10.3%
Total	2,332	100.0%

Where Incident Occurred

	Number	Percent
Place of residence	2,015	86.4%
Other place	242	10.4%
Place of employment or day services	60	2.6%
School	7	0.3%
Transportation	8	0.3%
Total	2,332	100.0%

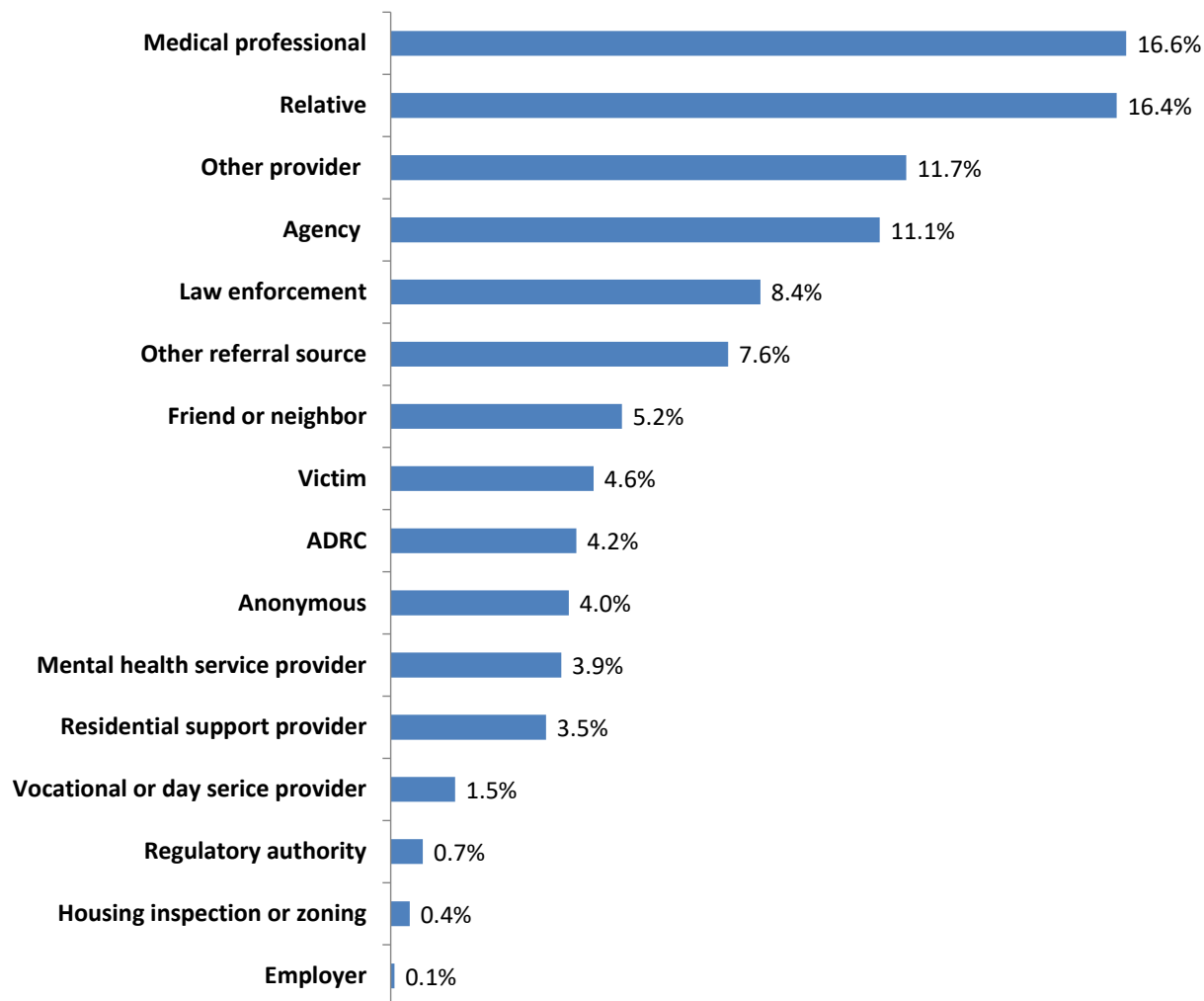


Referral Source

	Number	Percent
Medical professional	388	16.6%
Relative	383	16.4%
Other provider	272	11.7%
Agency	258	11.1%
Law enforcement	195	8.4%
Other referral source	178	7.6%
Friend or neighbor	122	5.2%
Victim	107	4.6%
ADRC	98	4.2%
Anonymous	94	4.0%
Mental health service provider	90	3.9%
Residential support provider	82	3.5%
Vocational or day service provider	34	1.5%
Regulatory authority	17	0.7%
Housing inspection or zoning	10	0.4%
Employer	2	0.1%
Alleged abuser	1	0.0%
Substance abuse service provider	1	0.0%
Total	2,332	100.0%



Referral Source

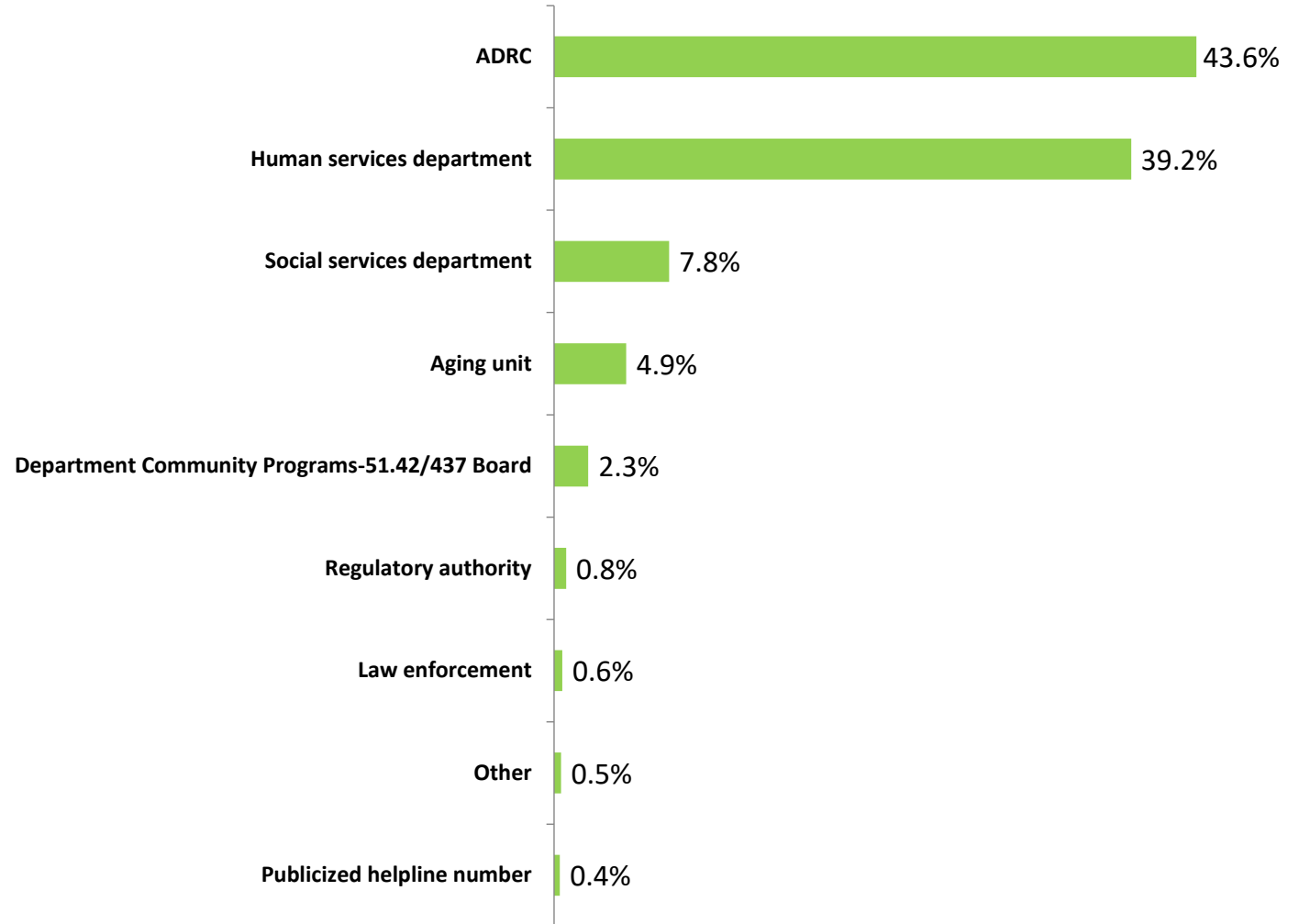




Call Received By:		
	Number	Percent
ADRC	1,016	43.6%
Human services department	913	39.2%
Social services department	182	7.8%
Aging unit	114	4.9%
Department Community Programs-51.42/437 Board	54	2.3%
Regulatory authority	19	0.8%
Law enforcement	13	0.6%
Other	11	0.5%
Publicized helpline number	9	0.4%
Animal control or humane society	1	0.0%
Developmental Disability Board	0	0.0%
Housing inspection or zoning	0	0.0%
Ombudsman or Board of Aging and Long-Term Care	0	0.0%
Total	2,332	100.0%
Initial Investigating Agency		
	Number	Percent
Human services department	1,274	54.6%
ADRC	365	15.7%
Aging unit	360	15.4%
Social services department	187	8.0%
Department Community Programs-51.42/437 Board	65	2.8%
Other	56	2.4%
Law enforcement	21	0.9%
Public health department	2	0.1%
Animal control or humane society	1	0.0%
Housing inspection or zoning	1	0.0%
Ombudsman or Board of Aging and Long-Term Care	0	0.0%
Developmental Disability Board	0	0.0%
Wisconsin Department of Justice	0	0.0%
Division of Quality Assurance or Licensing and Regulation	0	0.0%
Total	2,332	100.0%

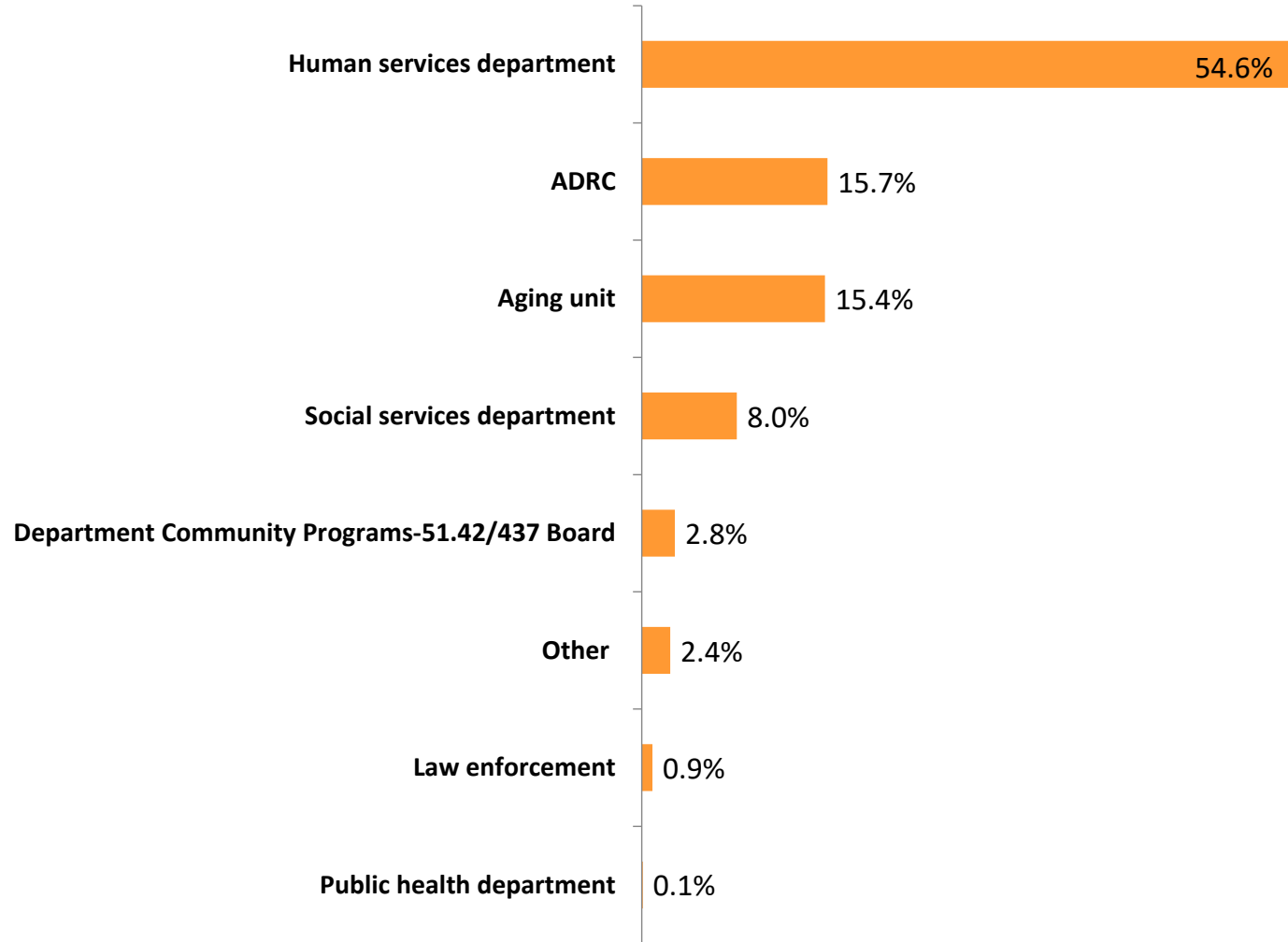


Call Received By:





Initial Investigating Agency





Was Incident Life Threatening?

	Number	Percent
No	2,059	88.3%
Yes	147	6.3%
Unknown	126	5.4%
Total	2,332	100.0%

Has Adult at Risk Died?

	Number	Percent
No	116	78.9%
Yes	28	19.0%
Unknown	3	2.0%
Total	147	100.0%

Note: Percents represent share of all life-threatening incidents.

Was Death Related to the Incident?

	Number	Percent
No	9	32.1%
Yes	13	46.4%
Unknown	6	21.4%
Total	28	100.0%

Note: Percents represent share of all incidents involving a death.

Was Death Directly Caused by Incident?

	Number	Percent
No	2	15.4%
Yes	9	69.2%
Unknown	2	15.4%
Total	13	100.0%

Note: Percents represent share of all incidents involving a death related to the incident.



Adult at Risk's Age

	Number	Percent
18-19 years	222	9.5%
20-29 years	424	18.2%
30-39 years	360	15.4%
40-49 years	425	18.2%
50-59 years	901	38.6%
Total	2,332	100.0%

Adult at Risk's Gender

	Number	Percent
Female	1,130	48.5%
Male	1,198	51.4%
Unknown	4	0.2%
Total	2,332	100.0%

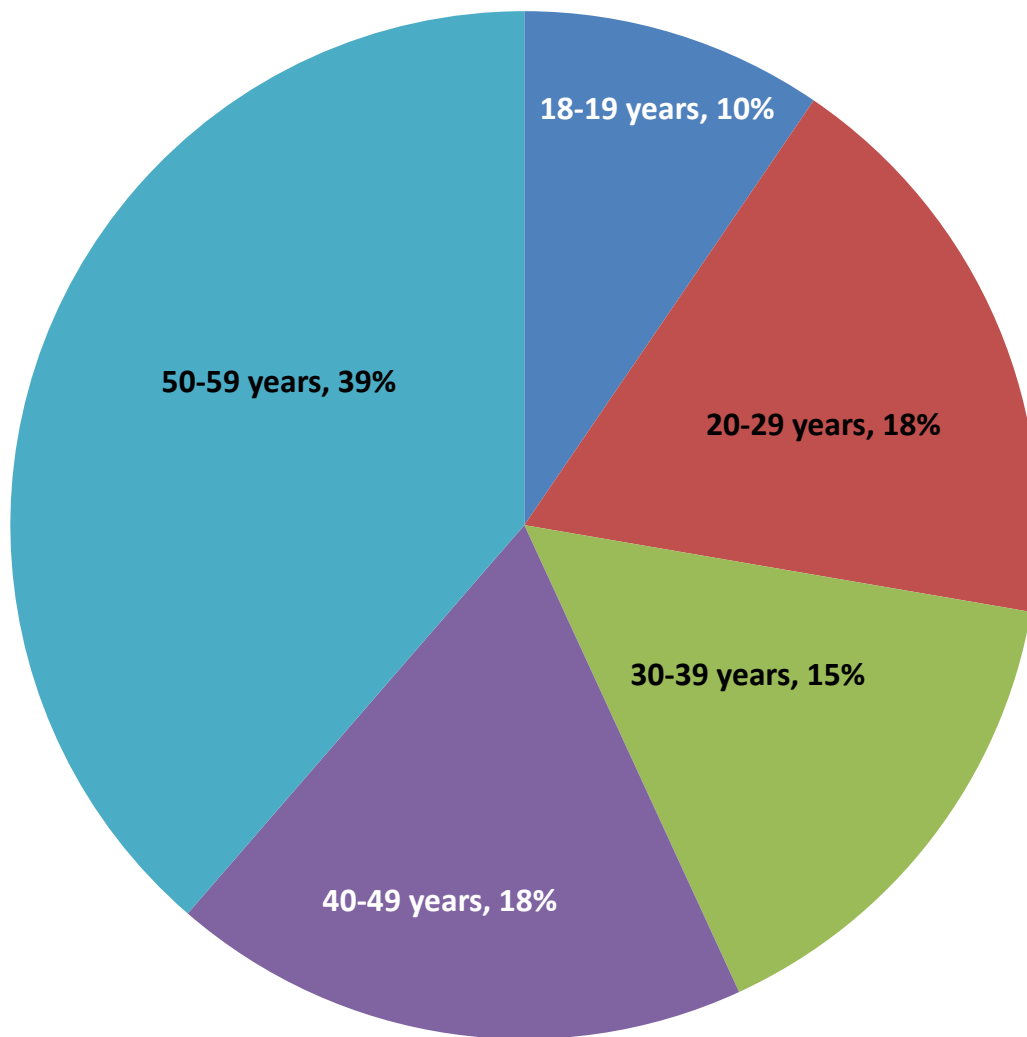
Adult at Risk's Race

Age	Number	Percent
White	1,215	52.1%
Black or African American	226	9.7%
Native American or Alaska Native	46	2.0%
Other race	73	3.1%
Asian	12	0.5%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	5	0.2%
Not reported or unknown	755	32.4%
Total	2,332	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

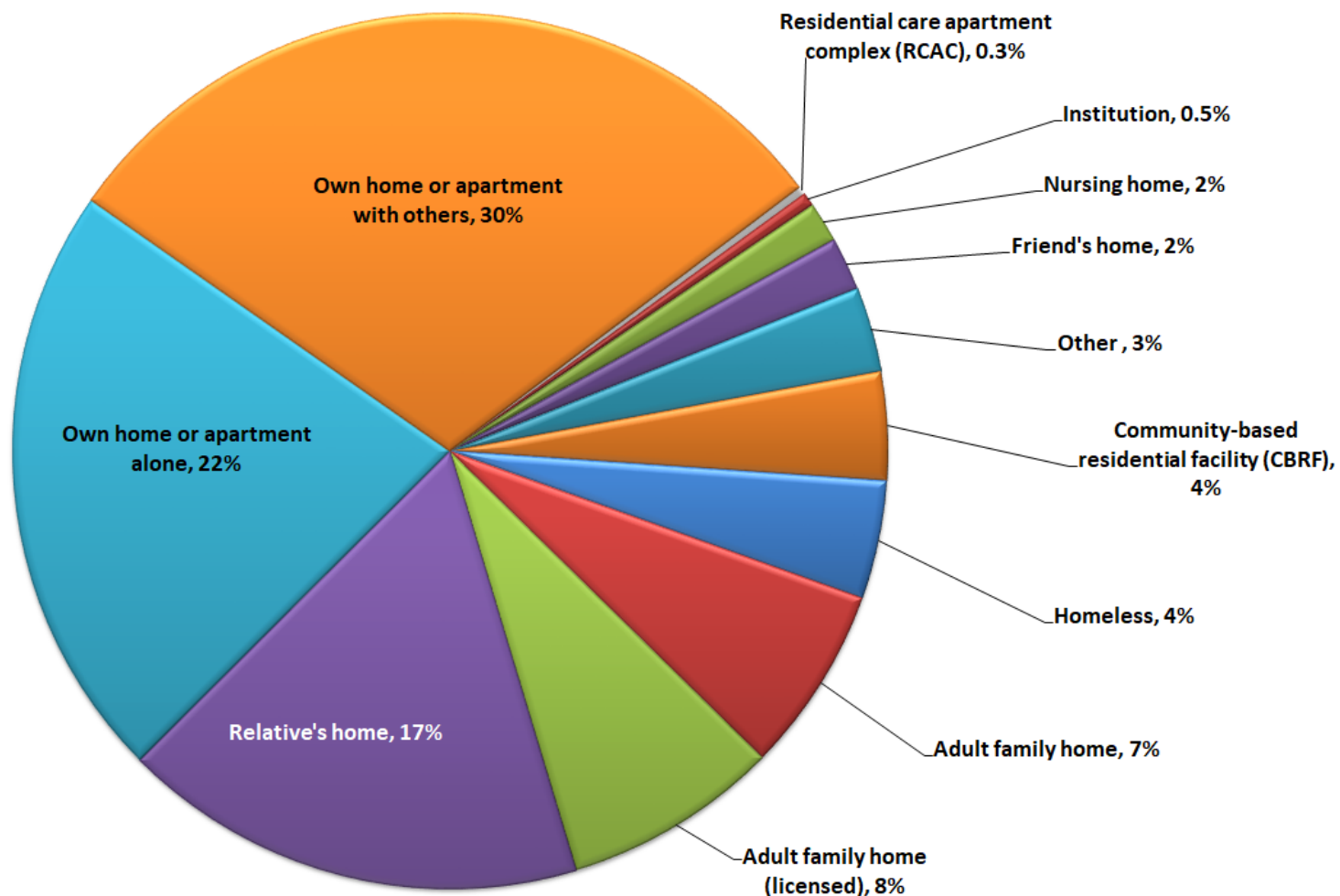




Adult at Risk's Living Arrangement		
	Number	Percent
Own home or apartment with others	700	30.0%
Own home or apartment alone	517	22.2%
Relative's home	401	17.2%
Adult family home (licensed)	186	8.0%
Adult family home	161	6.9%
Homeless	102	4.4%
Community-based residential facility (CBRF)	93	4.0%
Other	73	3.1%
Friend's home	46	2.0%
Nursing home	35	1.5%
Institution	12	0.5%
Residential care apartment complex (RCAC)	6	0.3%
Total	2,332	100.0%



Adult at Risk's Living Arrangement





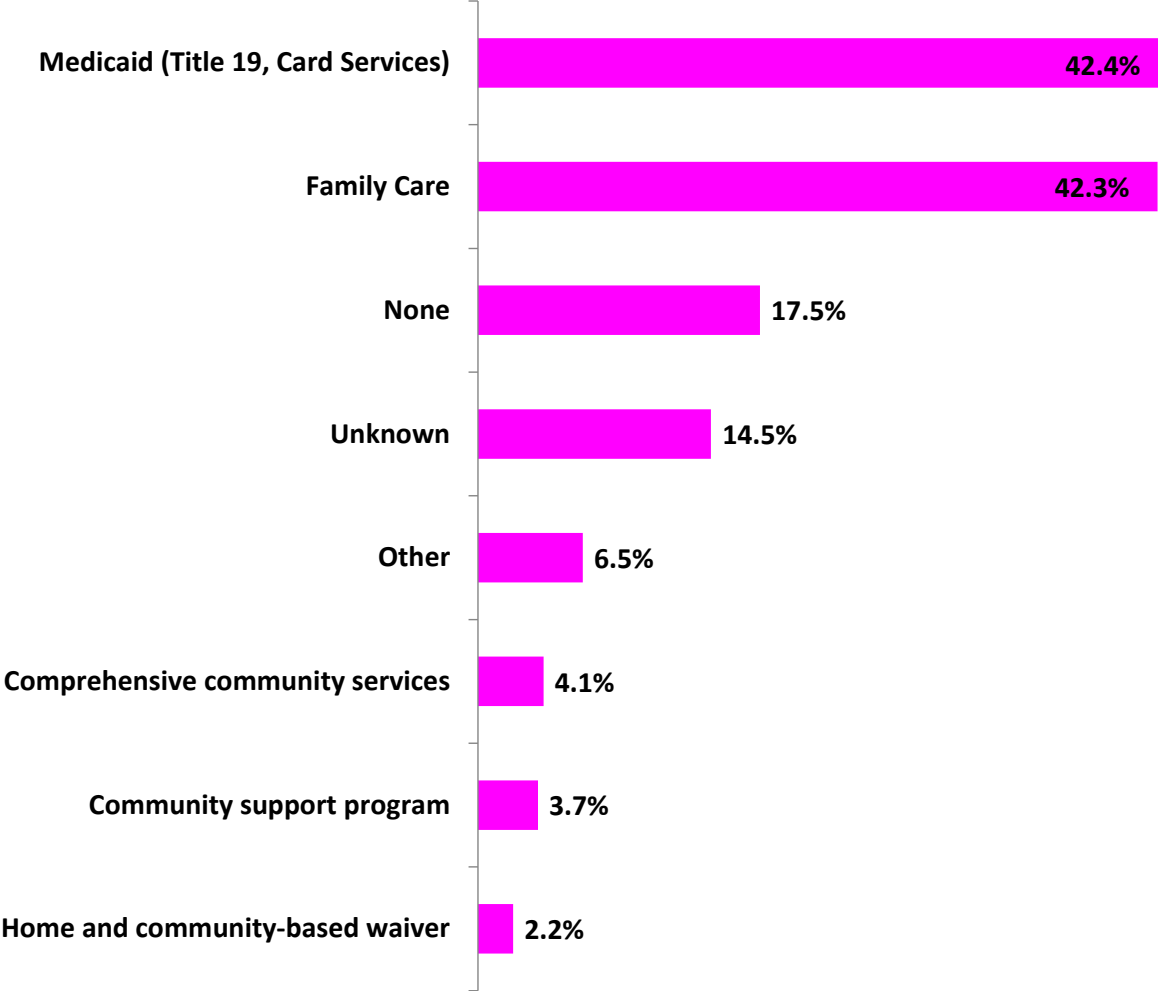
County and State Funded Programs That Have Served Adult at Risk Adults

	Number	Percent
Medicaid (Title 19, Card Services)	988	42.4%
Family Care	986	42.3%
None	409	17.5%
Unknown	338	14.5%
Other	152	6.5%
Comprehensive community services	95	4.1%
Community support program	87	3.7%
Home and community-based waiver	51	2.2%
Total	2,332	100.0%

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



County and State-funded Programs That Have Served Adults at Risk





Does Adult at Risk Have a Substitute Decision-Maker?

	Number	Percent
No	1,122	48.1%
Yes	980	42.0%
Unknown	230	9.9%
Total	2,332	100.0%

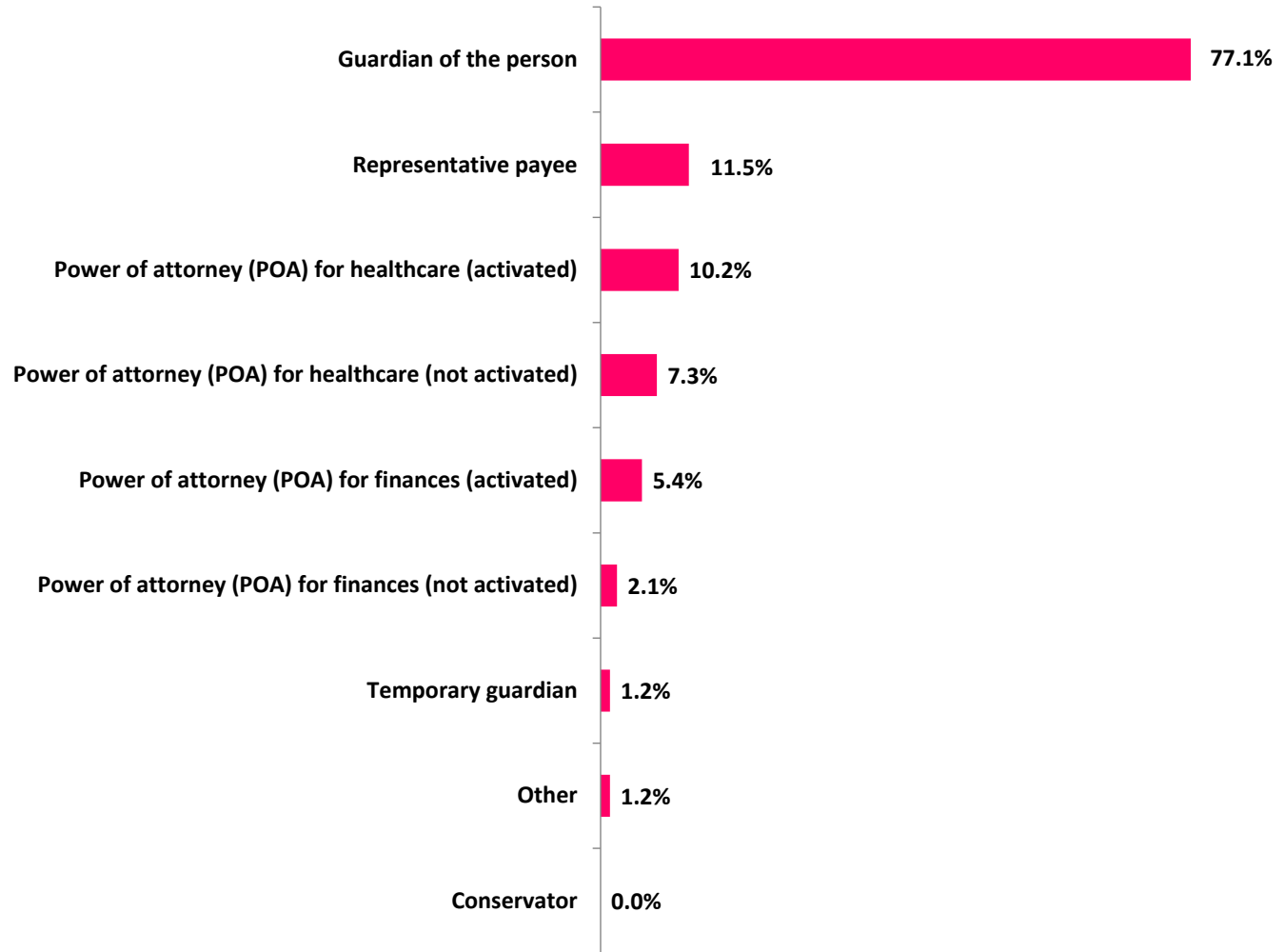
Type(s) of Substitute Decision-Maker

	Number	Percent
Guardian of the person	756	77.1%
Representative payee	113	11.5%
Power of attorney (POA) for healthcare (activated)	100	10.2%
Power of attorney (POA) for healthcare (not activated)	72	7.3%
Power of attorney (POA) for finances (activated)	53	5.4%
Power of attorney (POA) for finances (not activated)	21	2.1%
Other	12	1.2%
Temporary guardian	12	1.2%
Conservator	0	0.0%
Total	980	100.0%

Percents represent share of all those with any kind of substitute decision-maker (n=980). Multiple responses are allowed, so percents do not total 100%.



Type(s) of Substitute Decision-Maker





Adult at Risk's Characteristics

	Number	Percent
Developmental disability	923	39.6%
Mental illness	667	28.6%
Physical disability	308	13.2%
Other medical condition	258	11.1%
Mobility impaired	241	10.3%
Medically fragile	231	9.9%
Chronic mental illness	225	9.6%
Challenging or dangerous behavior	213	9.1%
Alcohol abuse	157	6.7%
Unemployed	142	6.1%
Diabetes	134	5.7%
Drug abuse	133	5.7%
Other characteristic	114	4.9%
Brain injury	102	4.4%
Disoriented and confused	101	4.3%
Incontinent	99	4.2%
Stroke-related condition	87	3.7%
None of the listed characteristics	86	3.7%
Dementia	81	3.5%
Morbidly obese	76	3.3%
Homebound	75	3.2%
Chronic alcoholic	54	2.3%
Communication disorder	54	2.3%
Blind or visually impaired	46	2.0%
Deaf or hard of hearing	33	1.4%
Frail elderly	31	1.3%
Financial dependence: alleged abuser dependent on adult at risk	27	1.2%
Financially dependent on abuser	23	1.0%
Functionally illiterate	17	0.7%
Limited English proficiency	3	0.1%
Total	2,332	100.0%

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	32	2.3%
25 to 44 years	164	11.6%
45 to 59 years	189	13.3%
60 to 79 years	126	8.9%
80 years or older	18	1.3%
No abuser or age unknown	887	62.6%
Total	1,416	100.0%
<i>Total includes all alleged abusers; some incidents involve more than one.</i>		

Alleged Abusers' Gender

	Number	Percent
Female	667	47.1%
Male	491	34.7%
Unknown	258	18.2%
Total	1,416	100.0%



Alleged Abusers' Relationship to Adult at Risk

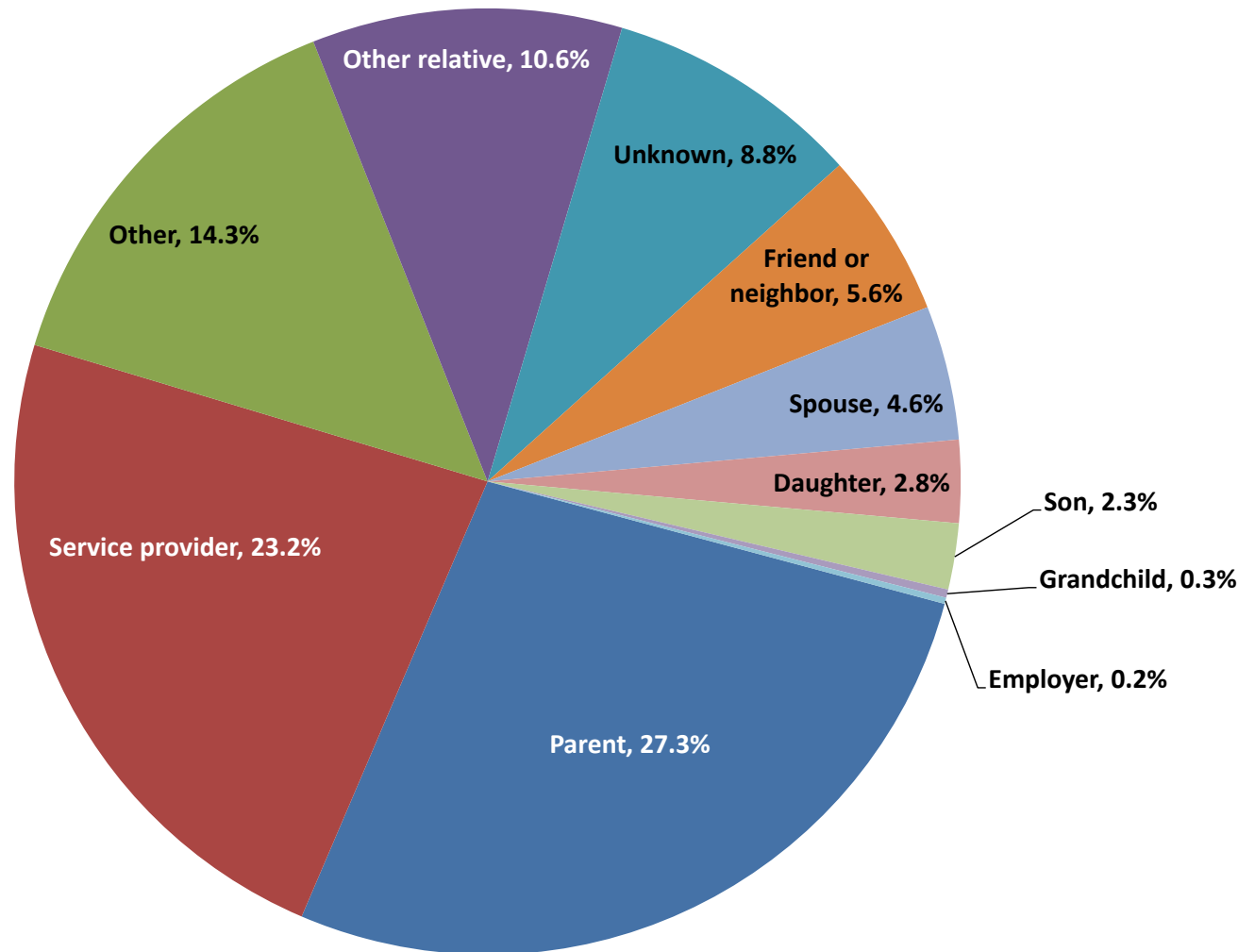
	Number	Percent
Parent	386	27.3%
Service provider	329	23.2%
Other	203	14.3%
Other relative	150	10.6%
Unknown	124	8.8%
Friend or neighbor	80	5.6%
Spouse	65	4.6%
Daughter	40	2.8%
Son	32	2.3%
Grandchild	4	0.3%
Employer	3	0.2%
Total	1,416	100.0%

Are Alleged Abusers Caregivers?

	Number	Percent
Yes	754	53.2%
No	555	39.2%
Unknown	107	7.6%
Total	1,416	100.0%



Alleged Abusers' Relationships to Adult at Risk





Do Alleged Abusers Live with Adult at Risk?

	Number	Percent
No	687	48.5%
Yes	638	45.1%
Unknown	91	6.4%
Total	1,416	100.0%

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

	Number	Percent
No	1,048	74.0%
Yes	368	26.0%
Total	1,416	100.0%



Abusers' Legal Status

	Number	Percent
No legal status	798	56.4%
Guardian of the person	278	19.6%
Unknown legal status	248	17.5%
Guardian of the estate	194	13.7%
Representative payee	49	3.5%
Power of attorney (POA) for healthcare (activated)	29	2.0%
Other legal status	15	1.1%
Power of attorney (POA) for healthcare (not activated)	13	0.9%
Power of attorney (POA) for finances (activated)	12	0.8%
Power of attorney (POA) for finances (not activated)	6	0.4%
Conservator	2	0.1%
Temporary guardian	1	0.1%
Total	1,416	100.0%

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
None of the listed characteristics	949	67.0%
Other characteristic	138	9.7%
Mental Illness	71	5.0%
Drug abuse	45	3.2%
Challenging or dangerous behavior	41	2.9%
Unemployed	41	2.9%
Developmental disability	39	2.8%
Frail Elderly	38	2.7%
Financial dependence: alleged abuser dependent on adult at risk	36	2.5%
Alcohol abuse	30	2.1%
Medically fragile	22	1.6%
Other medical condition	18	1.3%
Chronic mental illness	16	1.1%
Mobility impaired	15	1.1%
Physical disability	15	1.1%
Financial dependence: adult at risk on abuser	14	1.0%
Disoriented and confused	12	0.8%
Dementia	9	0.6%
Diabetes	7	0.5%
Stroke-related condition	6	0.4%
Blind or visually impaired	4	0.3%
Morbidly Obese	4	0.3%
Homebound	3	0.2%
Brain injury	2	0.1%
Chronic alcoholic	2	0.1%
Deaf or hard of hearing	2	0.1%
Incontinent	2	0.1%
Communication disorder	1	0.1%
Functionally illiterate	0	0.0%
Limited English proficiency	0	0.0%
Total	1,416	100.0%

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
No, one alleged abuser only	1,303	92.0%
Yes	113	8.0%
Total	1,416	100.0%



Was Hurt or Harm Substantiated?		
	Number	Percent
Substantiated	995	42.7%
Unsubstantiated	889	38.1%
Unable to substantiate	448	19.2%
Total	2,332	100.0%



Actions Taken to Assist Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Services not needed	526	22.6%
Services offered-some accepted	386	16.6%
Services offered-not accepted	339	14.5%
Services offered-all accepted	322	13.8%
Guardian referral	266	11.4%
Outreach continues	175	7.5%
Referral made to other agency	169	7.2%
Investigation not accepted	145	6.2%
Referral to law enforcement or Department of Justice	127	5.4%
Referral to regulatory authority	122	5.2%
Protective services placement	108	4.6%
Other disposition	103	4.4%
Referral to caregiver misconduct registry	94	4.0%
Other legal action	48	2.1%
Mental health commitment	38	1.6%
Referral to protection or advocacy agencies	35	1.5%
Response or investigation continues	28	1.2%
Services needed are not available	17	0.7%
Referral made to state agency	4	0.2%
Referral to detoxification services	4	0.2%
Total	2,332	100.0%

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



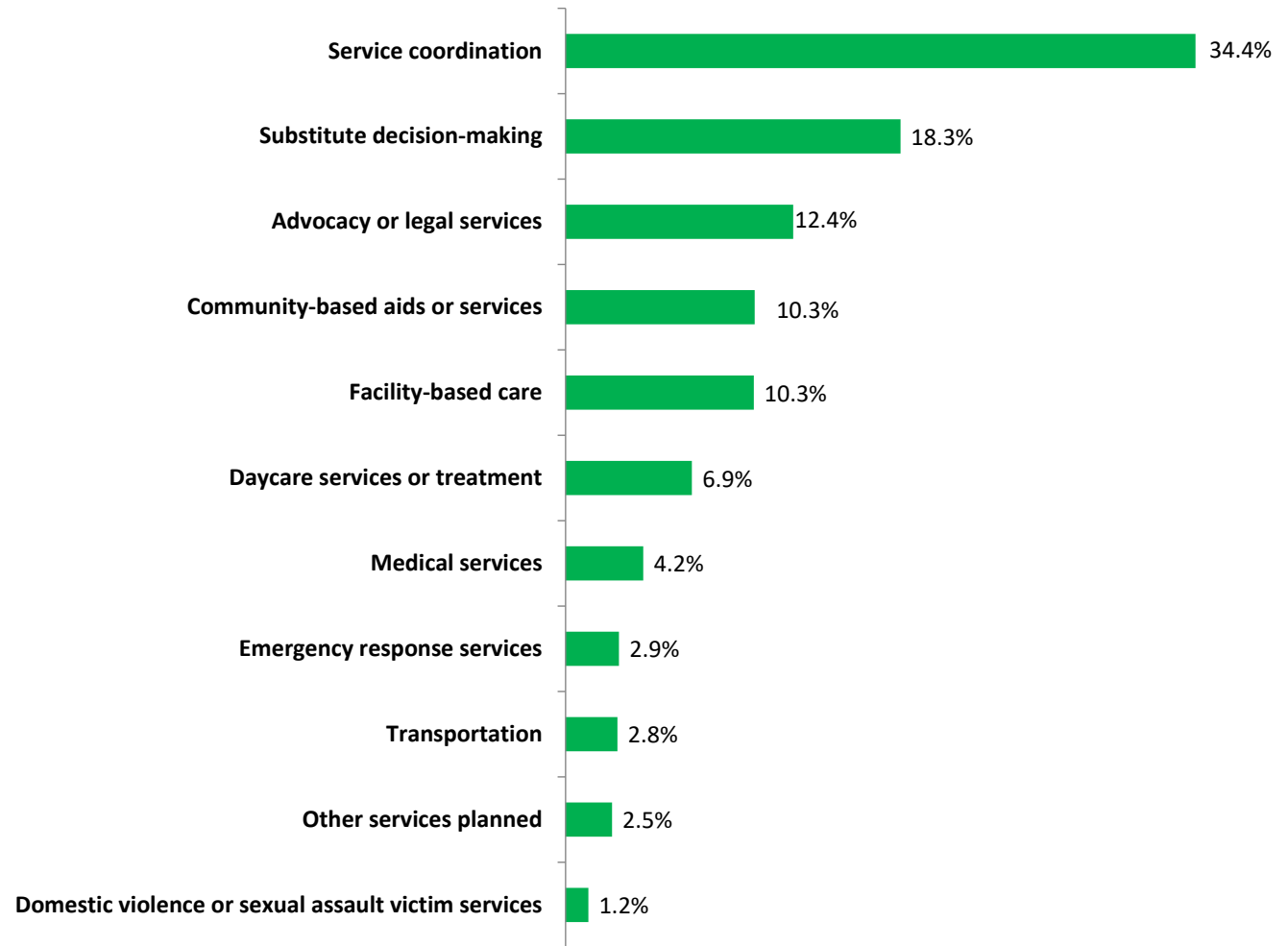
Services Planned for Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Service coordination	803	34.4%
Substitute decision-making	427	18.3%
Advocacy or legal services	290	12.4%
Community-based aids or services	241	10.3%
Facility-based care	240	10.3%
Daycare services or treatment	161	6.9%
Medical services	99	4.2%
Emergency response services	68	2.9%
Transportation	66	2.8%
Other services planned	59	2.5%
Domestic violence or sexual assault victim services	29	1.2%
Total	2,332	100.0%

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)

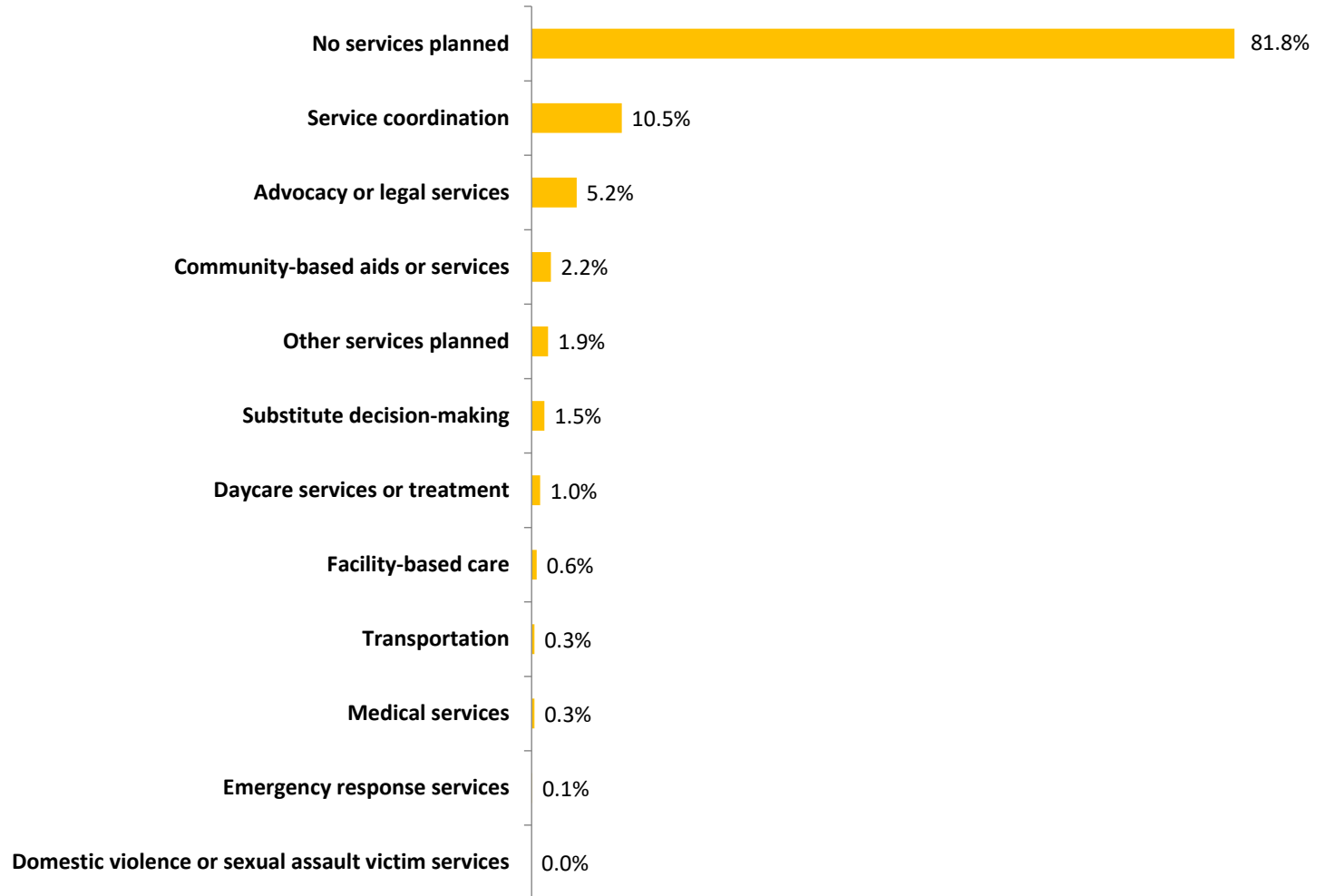
	Number	Percent
No services planned	982	81.8%
Service coordination	126	10.5%
Advocacy or legal services	63	5.2%
Community-based aids or services	27	2.2%
Other services planned	23	1.9%
Substitute decision-making	18	1.5%
Daycare services or treatment	12	1.0%
Facility-based care	7	0.6%
Medical services	4	0.3%
Transportation	4	0.3%
Emergency response services	1	0.1%
Domestic violence or sexual assault victim services	0	0.0%
Total	1,201	100.0%

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 alleged.



Services Plan for Alleged Abuser(s)





Contact Information

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APS Coordinator

Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources

Division of Public Health

Department of Health Services

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