



# **Wisconsin's Annual Elder Abuse and Neglect Report: 2018**

A statewide summary of reports  
submitted by Wisconsin counties



# Introduction: The Annual Elder Abuse and Neglect Report

In Wisconsin, county agencies receive elder 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 elder adults at risk and help ensure their safety.

After responding to a referral, county agencies file an incident report with the Department of Health Services, using the web-based Wisconsin Incident Tracking System (WITS). A compilation of all county reports from 2018 are the basis of this statewide report: *Wisconsin's Annual Elder Abuse and Neglect Report*.



# 2018 Annual Report

This report documents and summarizes reported incidents in Wisconsin, providing information about:

- The types of abuse and neglect reported.
- The characteristics of elder adults at risk and alleged abusers.
- The local responses that guide the state's efforts to stop elder abuse.

Allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of individuals living in licensed facilities are generally addressed by the Department of Health Services' Office of Caregiver Quality, which is located in the Division of Quality Assurance (DQA).



# Your Role in Reporting Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation of Older Adults

Wisconsin has made great strides in identifying and protecting elders. 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 elder adult at risk (ages 60 and older).

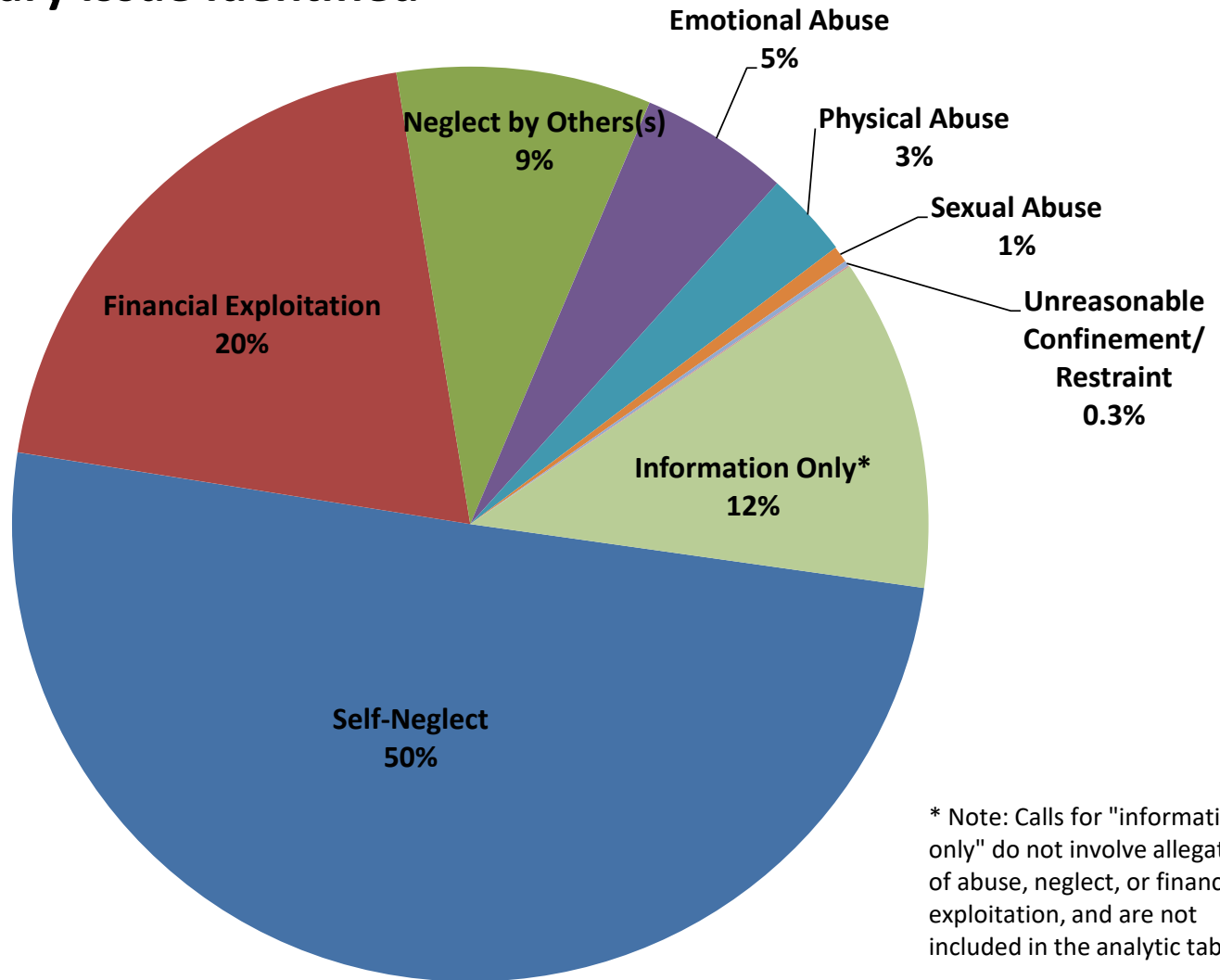
See <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/aps/Contacts/aaragencies.htm> for these help line phone numbers.



<b>Primary Reason for Call/Issue Identified</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Self-Neglect	4,421	50.3%
Financial Exploitation	1,751	19.9%
Neglect by Others(s)	789	9.0%
Emotional Abuse	463	5.3%
Physical Abuse	265	3.0%
Sexual Abuse	51	0.6%
Unreasonable Confinement/Restraint	16	0.2%
Treatment without Consent	5	0.1%
<i>Information Only*</i>	1,031	11.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,792</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<p><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></p>		



## Primary Issue Identified



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



<b>Previous Report on This Individual?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No	4,496	57.9%
Yes	2,640	34.0%
Unknown	625	8.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



<b>Where Incident Occurred</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Place of residence	6,773	87.3%
Other place (specify)	913	11.8%
Place of employment/Day services	53	0.7%
School	10	0.1%
Transportation	12	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

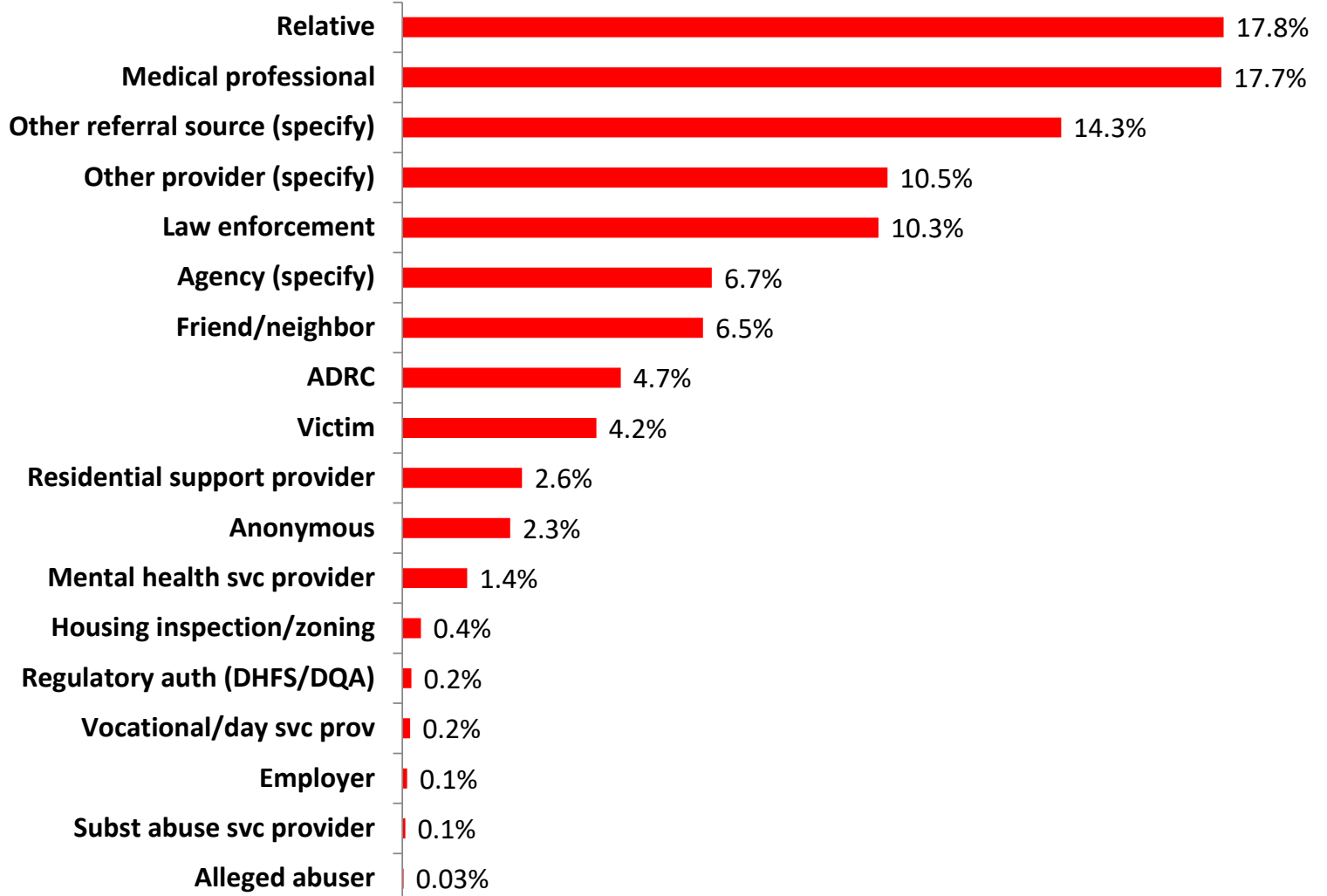




<b>Referral Source</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Relative	1,380	17.8%
Medical professional	1,376	17.7%
Other referral source (specify)	1,107	14.3%
Other provider (specify)	815	10.5%
Law enforcement	800	10.3%
Agency (specify)	520	6.7%
Friend/neighbor	505	6.5%
ADRC	367	4.7%
Victim	326	4.2%
Residential support provider	201	2.6%
Anonymous	181	2.3%
Mental health svc provider	109	1.4%
Housing inspection/zoning	31	0.4%
Regulatory auth (DHFS/DQA)	15	0.2%
Vocational/day svc prov	13	0.2%
Employer	8	0.1%
Subst abuse svc provider	5	0.1%
Alleged abuser	2	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



## Referral Source

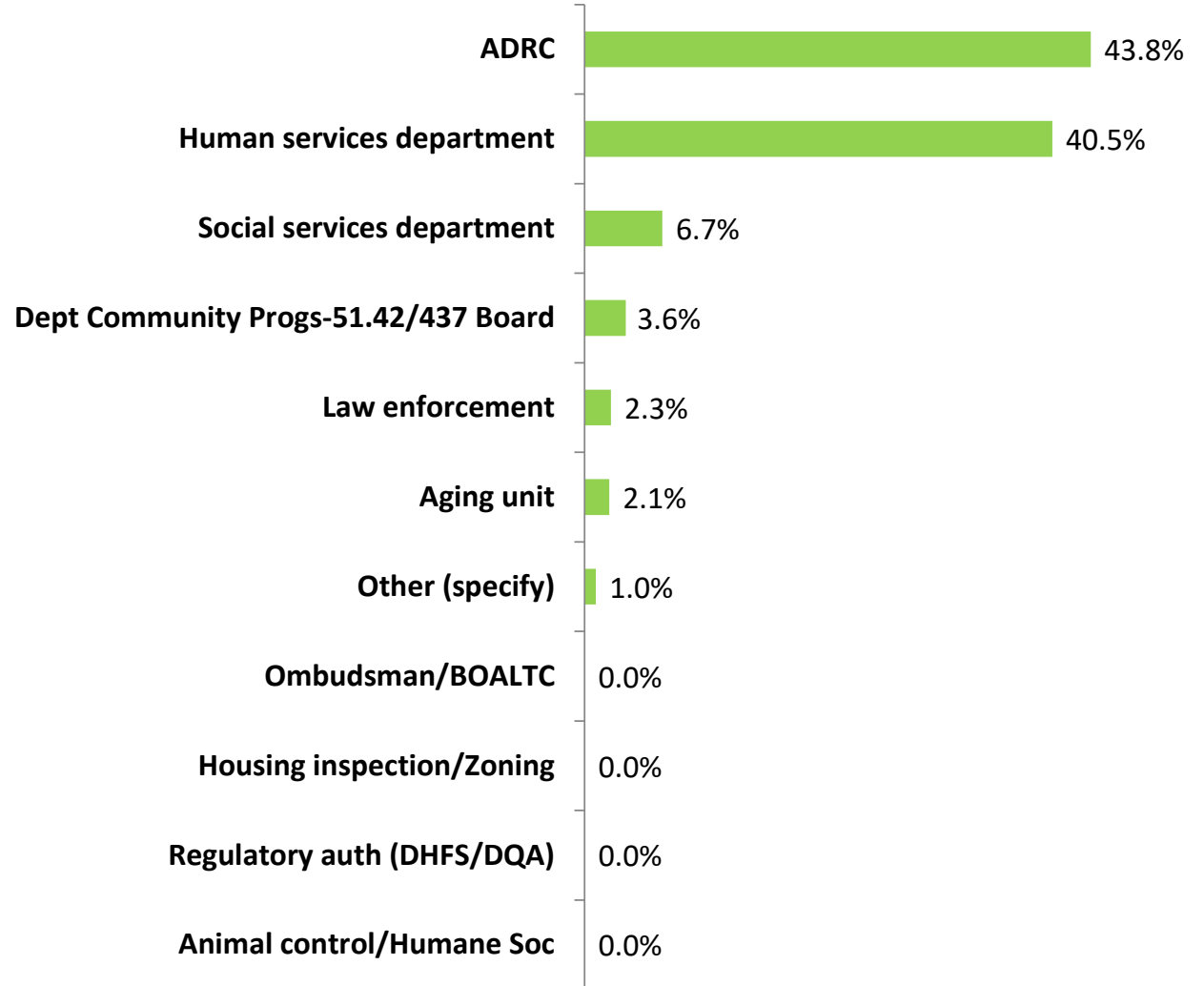




<b>Call Received By:</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
ADRC	3,398	43.8%
Human services department	3,140	40.5%
Social services department	522	6.7%
Dept Community Progs-51.42/437 Board	276	3.6%
Aging unit	165	2.1%
Law enforcement	176	2.3%
Other (specify)	76	1.0%
Regulatory auth (DHFS/DQA)	2	0.0%
Housing inspection/Zoning	2	0.0%
Publicized helpline number	1	0.0%
Ombudsman/BOALTC	2	0.0%
Animal control/Humane Soc	1	0.0%
Developmental Disability Board	0	0.0%
Publicized helpline number	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### Call Received By:

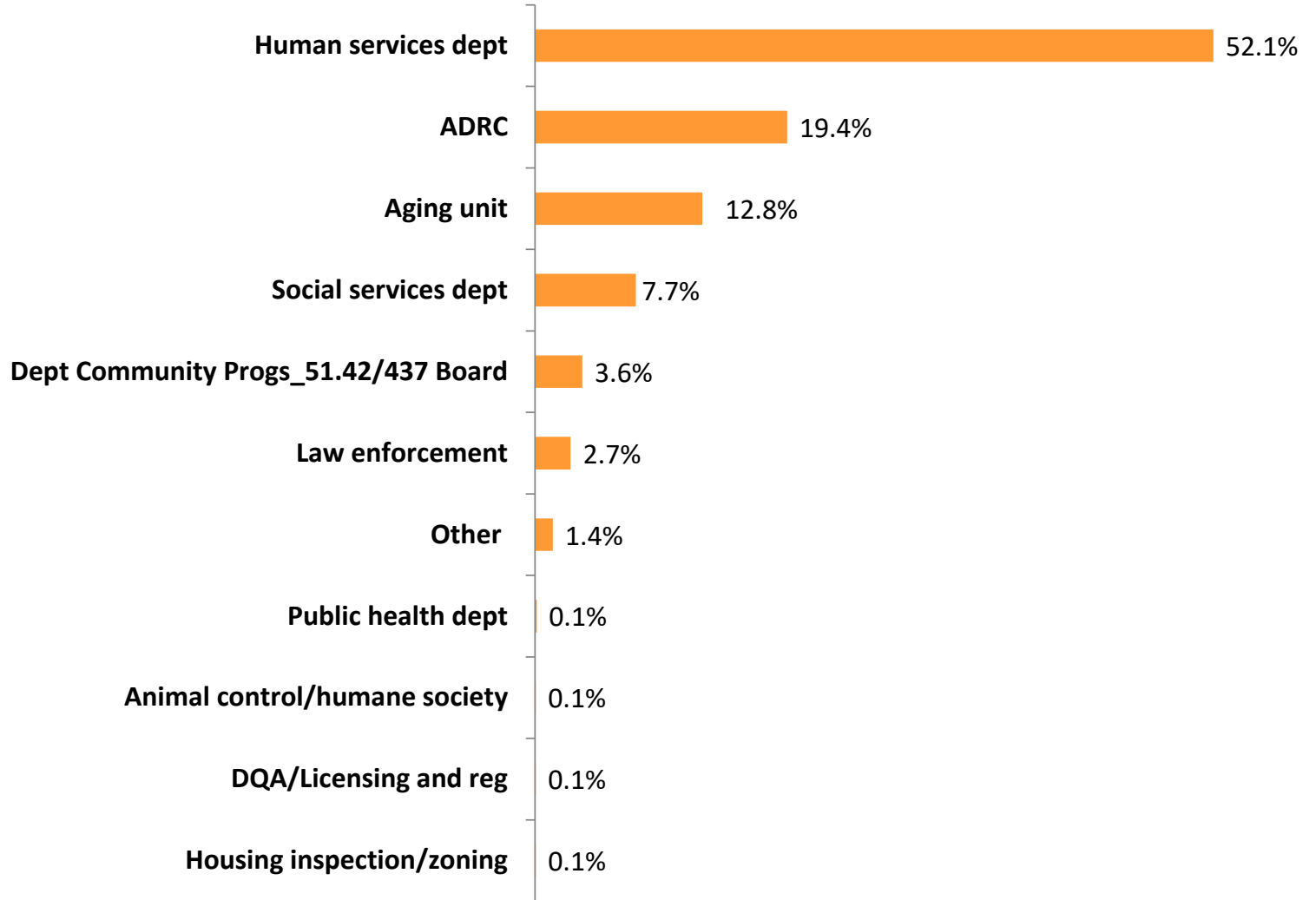




<b>Initial Investigating Agency</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Human services dept	4,041	52.1%
ADRC	1,502	19.4%
Aging unit	997	12.8%
Social services dept	600	7.7%
Dept Community Progs 51.42/437 Board	281	3.6%
Law enforcement	212	2.7%
Other	106	1.4%
Public health dept	10	0.1%
Housing inspection/zoning	4	0.1%
DQA/Licensing and reg	4	0.1%
Animal control/humane society	4	0.1%
Developmental Disability Board	0	0.0%
BOALTC/Ombudsman	0	0.0%
WI Department of Justice	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### Initial Investigating Agency





Was Incident Life Threatening?		
	Number	Percent
No	7,038	90.7%
Yes	429	5.5%
Unknown	294	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Has Elder Adult at Risk Died?		
	Number	Percent
No	354	82.5%
Yes	72	16.8%
Unknown	3	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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

Was Death Related to the Incident?		
	Number	Percent
Yes	29	40.3%
No	26	36.1%
Unknown	17	23.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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

Was Death Directly Caused by Incident?		
	Number	Percent
Yes	12	41.4%
No	10	34.5%
Unknown	7	24.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Note: Percents represent share of all incidents with death related to incident.*



<b>Elder Adult at Risk's Age</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
60-69 years	2,091	26.9%
70-79 years	2,546	32.8%
80-89 years	2,313	29.8%
90 years or more	811	10.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<b>Elder Adult at Risk's Gender</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Female	4,557	58.7%
Male	3,195	41.2%
Unknown	9	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

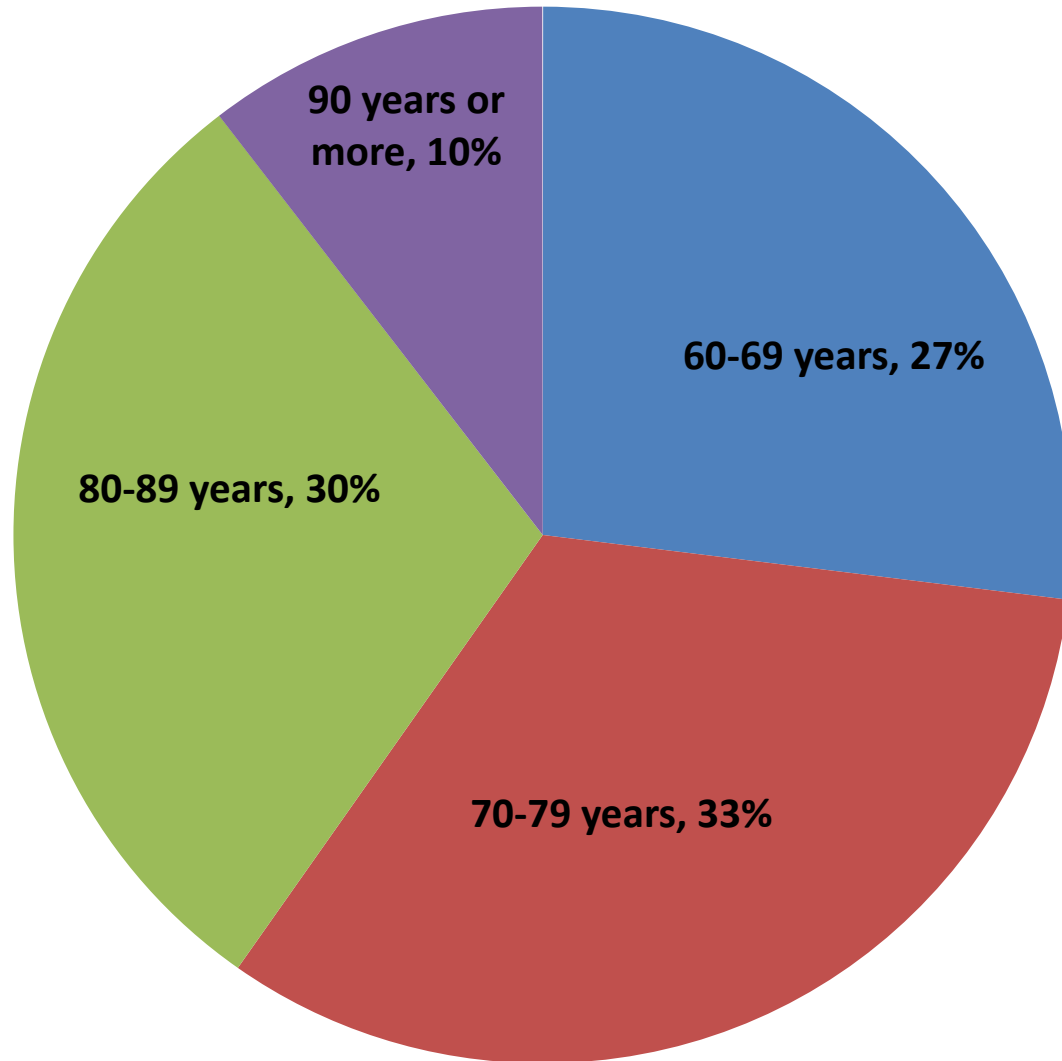
<b>Elder Adult at Risk's Race</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White	5,357	69.0%
Black/African American	348	4.5%
Native American/Alaska Native	122	1.6%
Other race	76	1.0%
Asian	20	0.3%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	13	0.2%
Not reported or unknown	1,825	23.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*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.*





### Elder Adult at Risk's Age

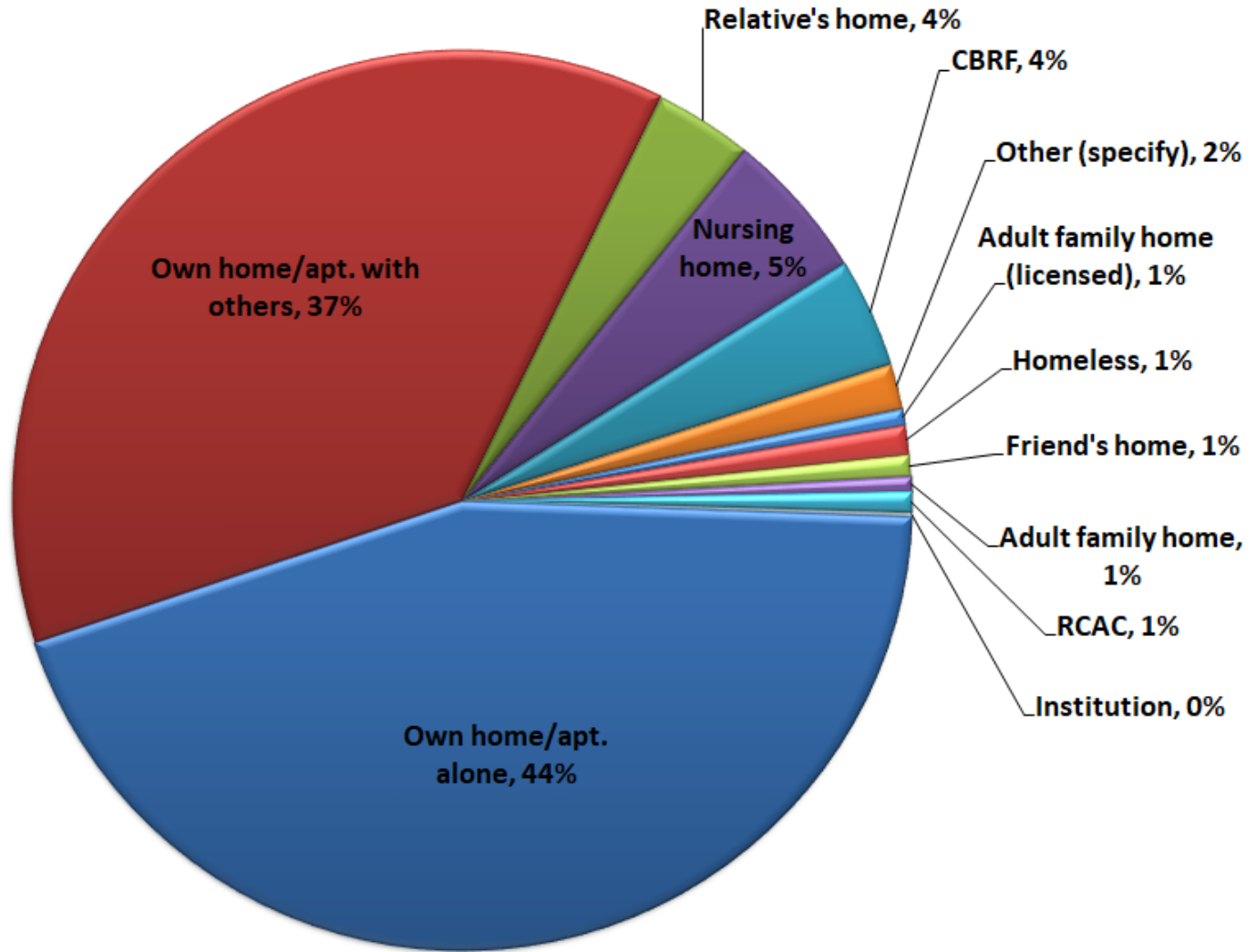




<b>Elder Adult at Risk's Living Arrangement</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Own home/apt. alone	3,442	44.3%
Own home/apt. with others	2,901	37.4%
Nursing home	419	5.4%
CBRF	304	3.9%
Relative's home	272	3.5%
Other (specify)	126	1.6%
Homeless	83	1.1%
Friend's home	58	0.7%
RCAC	55	0.7%
Adult family home (licensed)	48	0.6%
Adult family home	42	0.5%
Institution	11	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



## Elder Adult at Risk's Living Arrangement





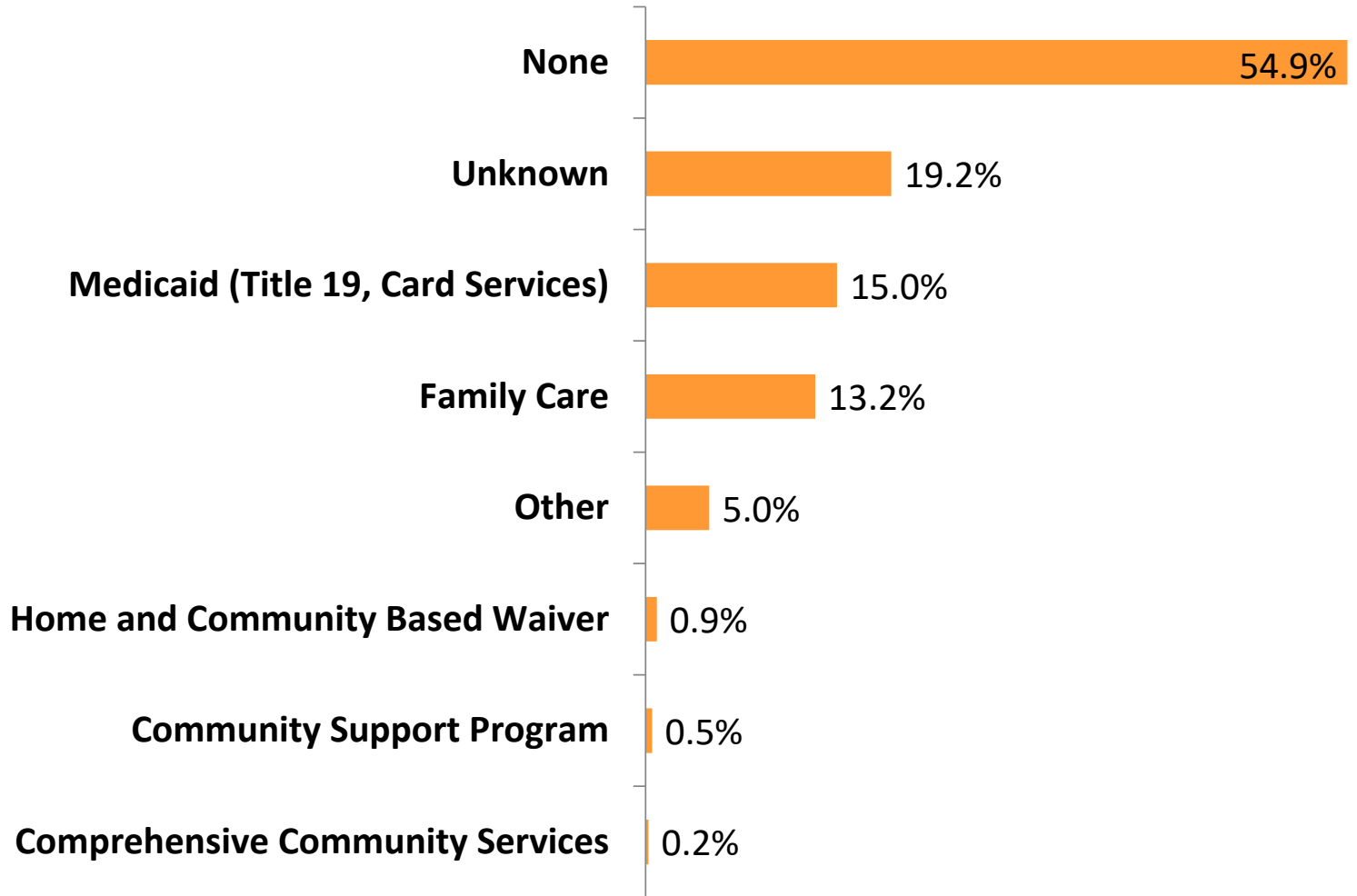
## County and State-funded Programs That Have Served Elder Adults at Risk

	Number	Percent
None	4,257	54.9%
Unknown	1,490	19.2%
Medicaid (Title 19, Card Services)	1,161	15.0%
Family Care	1,028	13.2%
Other	386	5.0%
Home and Community Based Waiver	67	0.9%
Community Support Program	39	0.5%
Comprehensive Community Services	17	0.2%

*Note: Elder Adult at Risk may be served by more than one program, so sum does not equal 100%.*



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





### Does Elder Adult at Risk Have a Substitute Decision-Maker?

	Number	Percent
No	3,815	49.2%
Yes	2,742	35.3%
Unknown	1,204	15.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

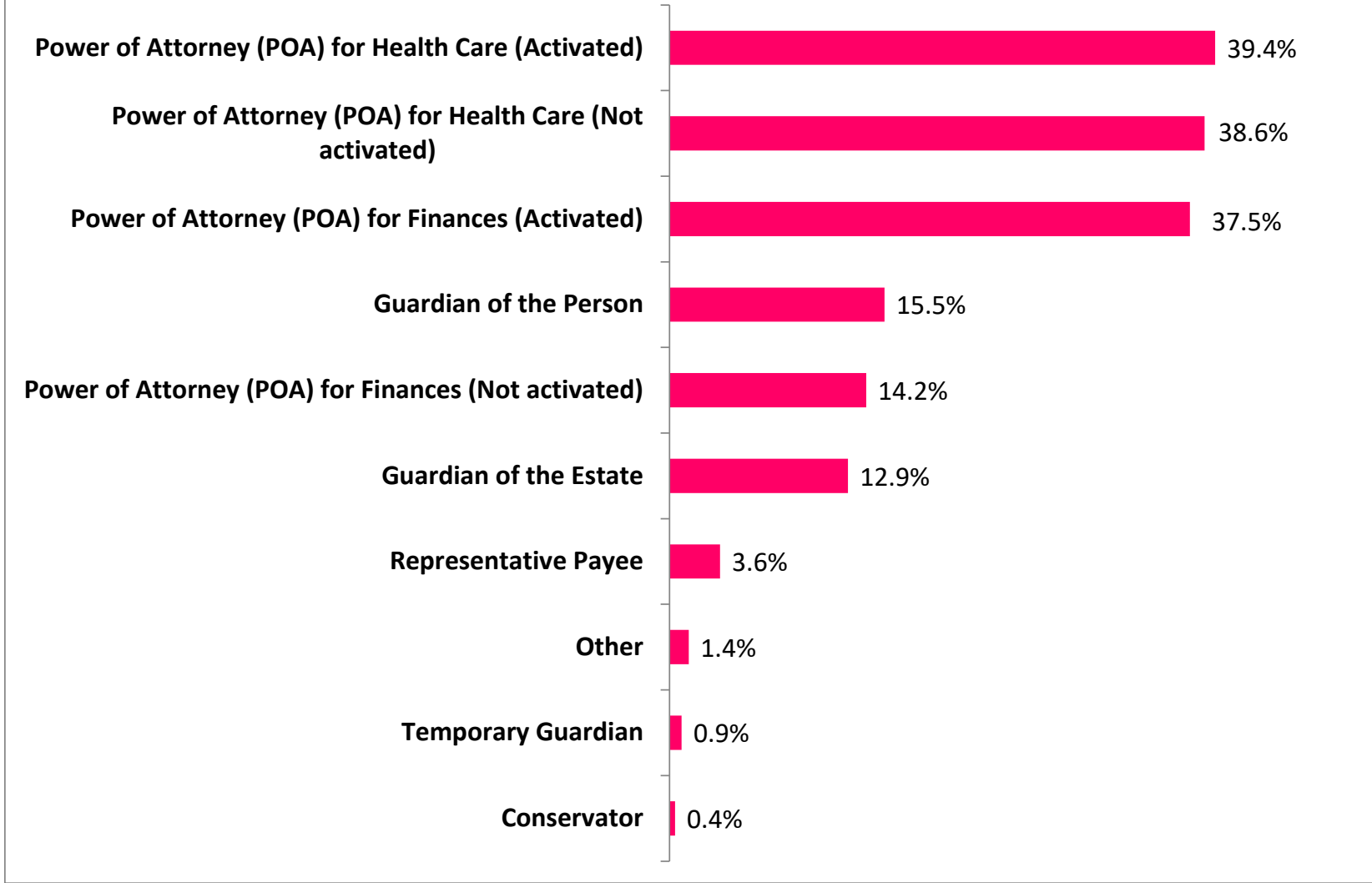
### Type(s) of Substitute Decision-Maker

	Number	Percent
Power of Attorney (POA) for Health Care (Activated)	1,079	39.4%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Health Care (Not activated)	1,058	38.6%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Finances (Activated)	1,029	37.5%
Guardian of the Person	425	15.5%
Guardian of the Estate	353	12.9%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Finances (Not activated)	389	14.2%
Representative Payee	100	3.6%
Other	38	1.4%
Temporary Guardian	24	0.9%
Conservator	11	0.4%

*Percents represent share of all those with any kind of substitute decision-maker (n=2,742). Multiple responses are allowed, so percents do not total 100%.*



### Type(s) of Substitute Decision-Maker





## Elder Adult at Risk's Characteristics

	Number	Percent
Frail elderly	3,148	40.6%
Dementia	2,213	28.5%
Mobility impaired	1,286	16.6%
Disoriented and confused	937	12.1%
Medically fragile	929	12.0%
Mental illness	909	11.7%
Other medical condition	738	9.5%
None of the listed characteristics	631	8.1%
Diabetes	601	7.7%
Physical disability	596	7.7%
Homebound	499	6.4%
Incontinent	451	5.8%
Alcohol abuse	404	5.2%
Challenging/dangerous behavior	365	4.7%
Deaf/hard of hearing	328	4.2%
Stroke-related condition	294	3.8%
Other characteristic	280	3.6%
Chronic mental illness	245	3.2%
Financial dependence: alleged abuser dependent on adult at risk	228	2.9%
Morbidly obese	197	2.5%
Developmental disability	184	2.4%
Blind/visually impaired	169	2.2%
Unemployed	152	2.0%
Chronic alcoholic	149	1.9%
Brain injury	83	1.1%
Drug abuse	67	0.9%
Communication disorder	49	0.6%
Financially dependent on abuser	33	0.4%
Limited English proficiency	17	0.2%
Functionally illiterate	14	0.2%

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





### Alleged Abusers' Gender

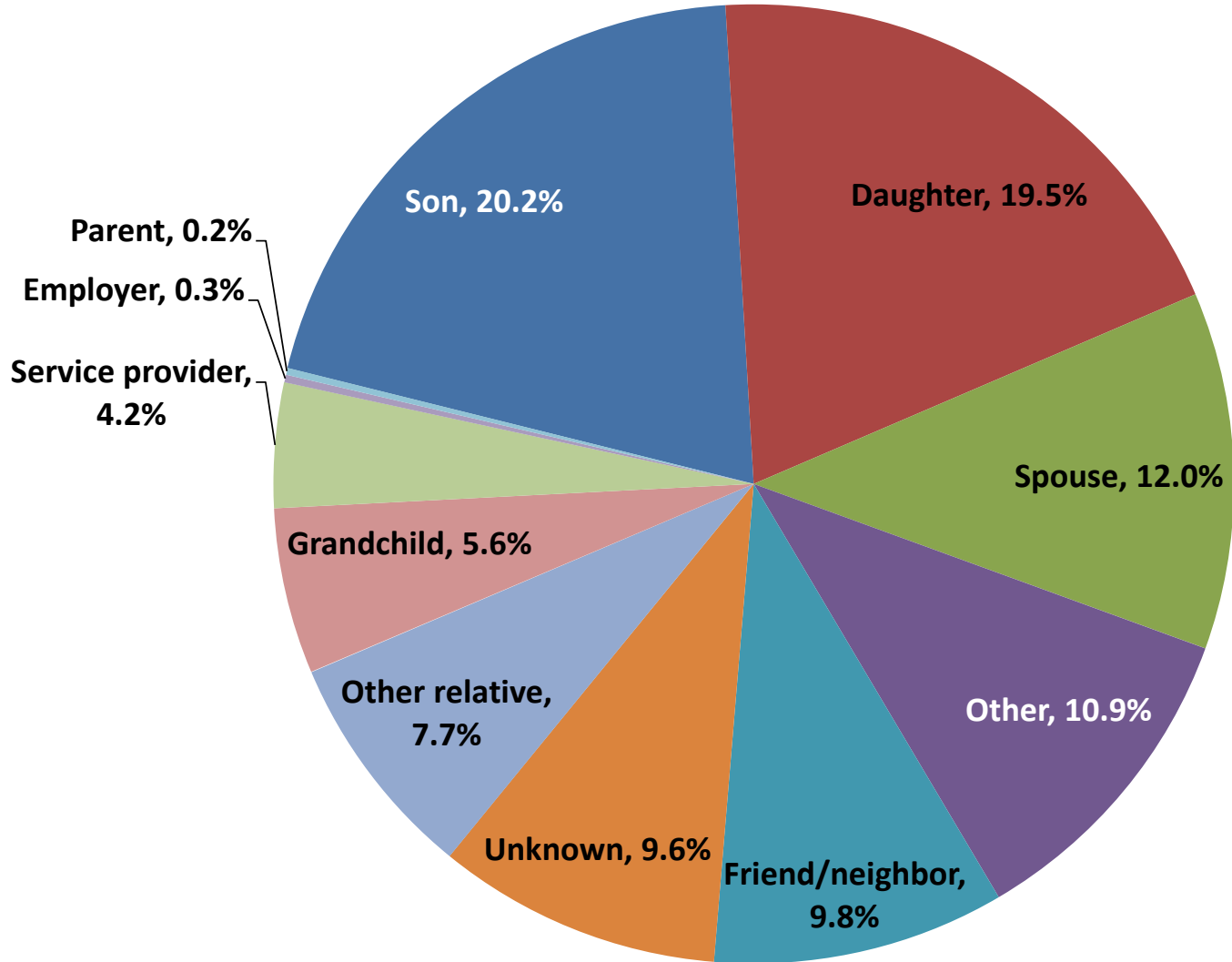
	Number	Percent
Female	1,738	44.7%
Male	1,699	43.7%
Unknown	448	11.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,885</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Alleged Abusers' Relationships to Elder Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Son	784	20.2%
Daughter	756	19.5%
Spouse	468	12.0%
Other	424	10.9%
Friend/neighbor	382	9.8%
Unknown	372	9.6%
Other relative	299	7.7%
Grandchild	217	5.6%
Service provider	164	4.2%
Employer	10	0.3%
Parent	9	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,885</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### Alleged Abusers' Relationships to Elder Adult at Risk





### Do Alleged Abusers Live with Elder Adult at Risk?

	Number	Percent
No	2,093	53.9%
Yes	1,564	40.3%
Unknown	228	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,885</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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

	Number	Percent
No	2,827	72.8%
Yes	1,058	27.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,885</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### Alleged Abusers' Legal Status

	Number	Percent
No legal status	2,098	54.0%
Unknown legal status	721	18.6%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Health Care (Activated)	469	12.1%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Finances (Activated)	430	11.1%
Guardian of the Person	127	3.3%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Health Care (Not activated)	263	6.8%
Guardian of the Estate	102	2.6%
Representative Payee	43	1.1%
Power of Attorney (POA) for Finances (Not activated)	109	2.8%
Other legal status	62	1.6%
Temporary Guardian	4	0.1%
Conservator	3	0.1%

*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
None of the listed characteristics	2,090	53.8%
Financial dependence: alleged abuser dependent on adult at risk	624	16.1%
Other characteristic	310	8.0%
Unemployed	274	7.1%
Drug abuse	277	7.1%
Mental illness (mentally ill)	232	6.0%
Alcohol abuse	205	5.3%
Challenging/dangerous behavior	175	4.5%
Frail Elderly	131	3.4%
Dementia	114	2.9%
Physical Disability	55	1.4%
Developmental disability	22	0.6%
Mobility impaired	58	1.5%
Chronic alcoholic	56	1.4%
Other medical condition	53	1.4%
Medically fragile	42	1.1%
Chronic mental illness	38	1.0%
Financial dependence: adult at risk on abuser	25	0.6%
Disoriented and confused	32	0.8%
Morbidly Obese	19	0.5%
Diabetes	17	0.4%
Deaf/hard of hearing	16	0.4%
Homebound	10	0.3%
Stroke-related condition	11	0.3%
Blind/visually impaired	10	0.3%
Incontinent	8	0.2%
Brain injury	4	0.1%
Functionally illiterate	1	0.0%
Communication disorder	3	0.1%
Limited English proficiency	2	0.1%

*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
No, one alleged abuser only	3,715	95.6%
Yes	170	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,885</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



<b>Was Hurt or Harm Substantiated?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Substantiated	4,093	52.7%
Unsubstantiated	2,400	30.9%
Unable to Substantiate	1,268	16.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



## Actions Taken to Assist Elder Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Services offered-some accepted	1,645	22.3%
Services offered-not accepted	1,626	22.1%
Services not needed	1,462	19.9%
Services offered-all accepted	962	13.1%
Guardian referral	701	9.5%
Referral made to other agency	622	8.4%
Outreach continues	587	8.0%
Investigation not accepted	520	7.1%
Protective services placement	534	7.3%
Other disposition	416	5.7%
Referral to law enforcement/Department of Justice	317	4.3%
Other legal action	162	2.2%
Referral to protection/advocacy agencies	61	0.8%
Mental health commitment	62	0.8%
Response/investigation continues	53	0.7%
Referral to regulatory authority (DHS/DQA)	35	0.5%
Services needed are not available	24	0.3%
Referral to Caregiver Misconduct Registry (DHS/DQA)	23	0.3%
Referral made to state agency	19	0.3%
Referral to detoxification services	11	0.1%

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





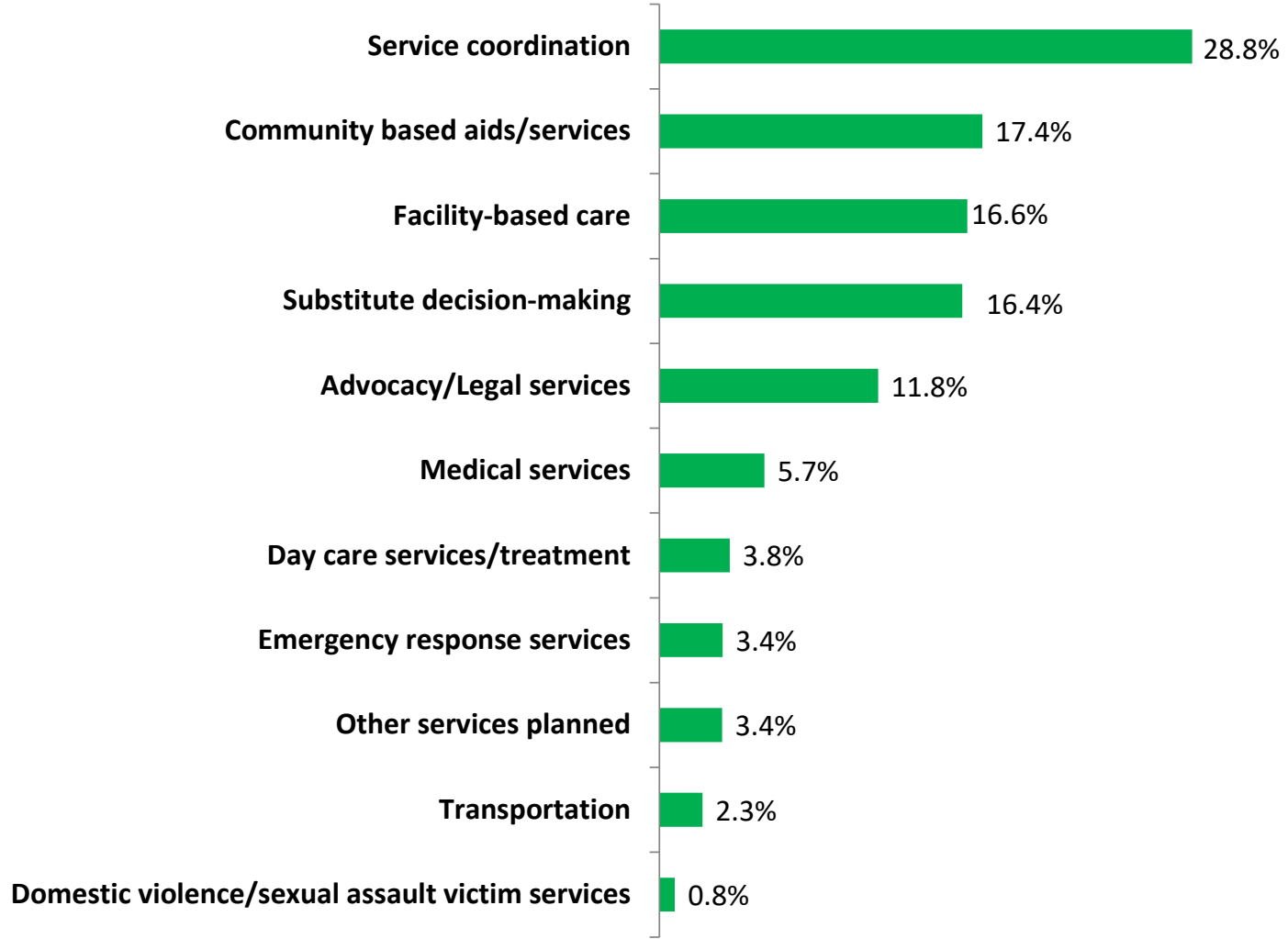
### Services Planned for Elder Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Service coordination	2,232	28.8%
Community based aids/services	1,353	17.4%
Facility-based care	1,290	16.6%
Substitute decision-making	1,269	16.4%
Advocacy/Legal services	916	11.8%
Medical services	440	5.7%
Day care services/treatment	294	3.8%
Emergency response services	264	3.4%
Other services planned	262	3.4%
Transportation	180	2.3%
Domestic violence/sexual assault victim services	64	0.8%

*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 Elder Adult at Risk





### Services Planned for Alleged Abuser(s)

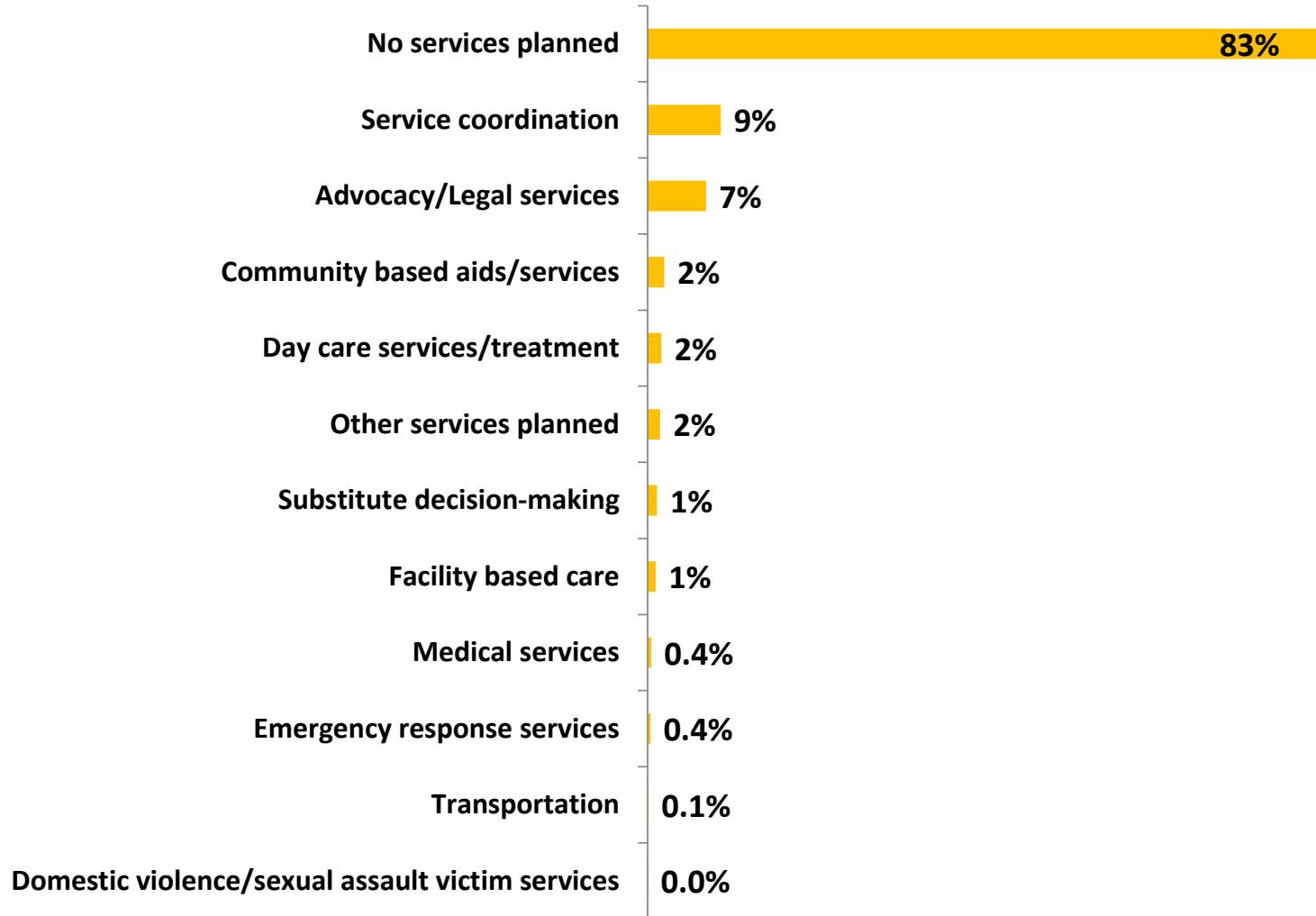
Service	Number	Percent
No services planned	2,779	83.2%
Service coordination	304	9.1%
Advocacy/Legal services	243	7.3%
Other services planned	52	1.6%
Community based aids/services	69	2.1%
Day care services/treatment	57	1.7%
Substitute decision-making	39	1.2%
Facility based care	33	1.0%
Medical services	15	0.4%
Emergency response services	12	0.4%
Transportation	4	0.1%
Domestic violence/sexual assault victim services	1	0.0%

*Multiple responses were allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%.*

*Percents refer to share of all incidents in which abuse or neglect was alleged (n=3,340).*



## Services Plan for Alleged Abuser(s)





## Contact Information

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**Adult Protective Services Coordinator**

Wisconsin Department of Health Services

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Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources

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