



Wisconsin's Annual Elder Abuse and Neglect Report: 2022

A statewide summary of reports
submitted by Wisconsin counties

P-00124-22 (07/2023)



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 2022 are the basis of this statewide report: *Wisconsin's Annual Elder Abuse and Neglect Report*.



2022 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.



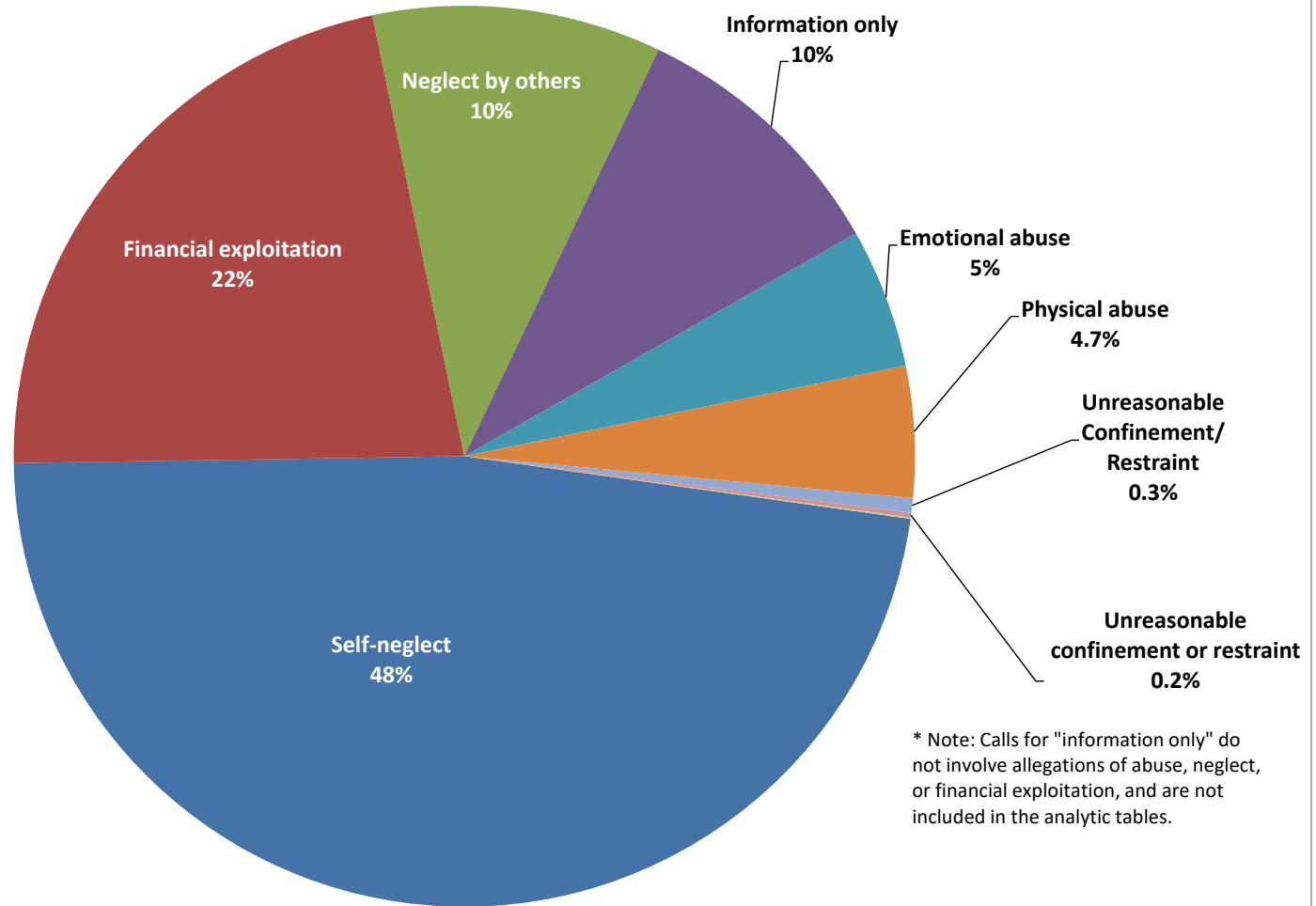
Primary Reason for Call/Issue Identified

	Number	Percent
Self-neglect	5,063	47.5%
Financial exploitation	2,340	22.0%
Neglect by others	1,104	10.4%
<i>Information only</i>	<i>1,030</i>	<i>9.7%</i>
Emotional abuse	533	5.0%
Physical abuse	502	4.7%
Sexual abuse	56	0.5%
Unreasonable confinement or restraint	18	0.2%
Treatment without consent	5	0.0%
Total	10,651	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	5,622	58.4%
Yes	3,089	32.1%
Unknown	910	9.5%
Total	9,621	100.0%

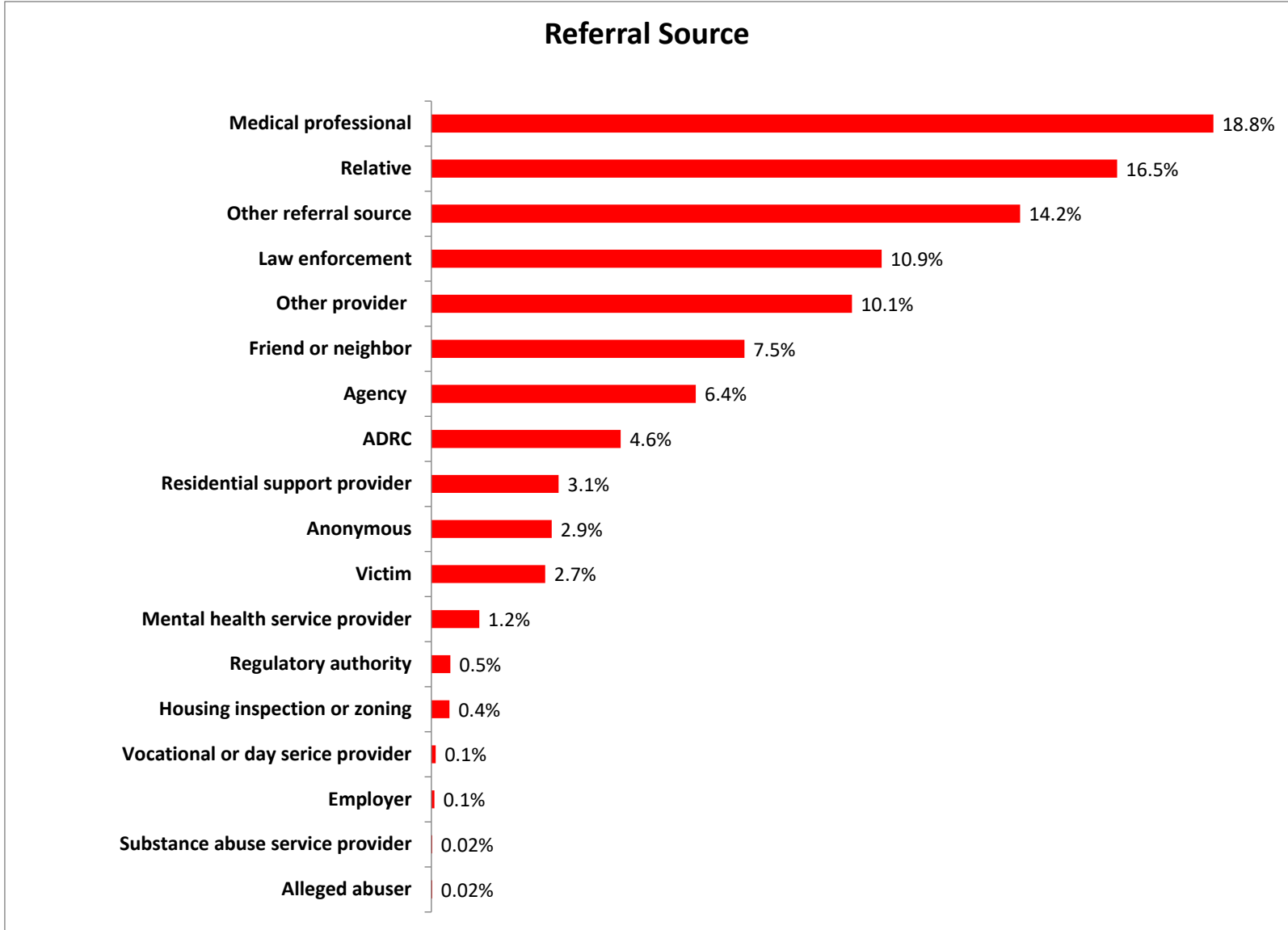


Where Incident Occurred

	Number	Percent
Place of residence	8,390	87.2%
Other place	1,022	10.6%
Place of employment or day services	163	1.7%
Transportation	28	0.3%
School	18	0.2%
Total	9,621	100.0%



Referral Source		
	Number	Percent
ADRC	439	4.6%
Agency	613	6.4%
Alleged abuser	2	0.0%
Anonymous	279	2.9%
Employer	7	0.1%
Friend or neighbor	726	7.5%
Housing inspection or zoning	42	0.4%
Law enforcement	1,044	10.9%
Medical professional	1,813	18.8%
Mental health service provider	111	1.2%
Other provider	975	10.1%
Other referral source	1,365	14.2%
Regulatory authority	44	0.5%
Relative	1,590	16.5%
Residential support provider	295	3.1%
Substance abuse service provider	2	0.0%
Victim	264	2.7%
Vocational or day service provider	10	0.1%
Total	9,621	100.0%



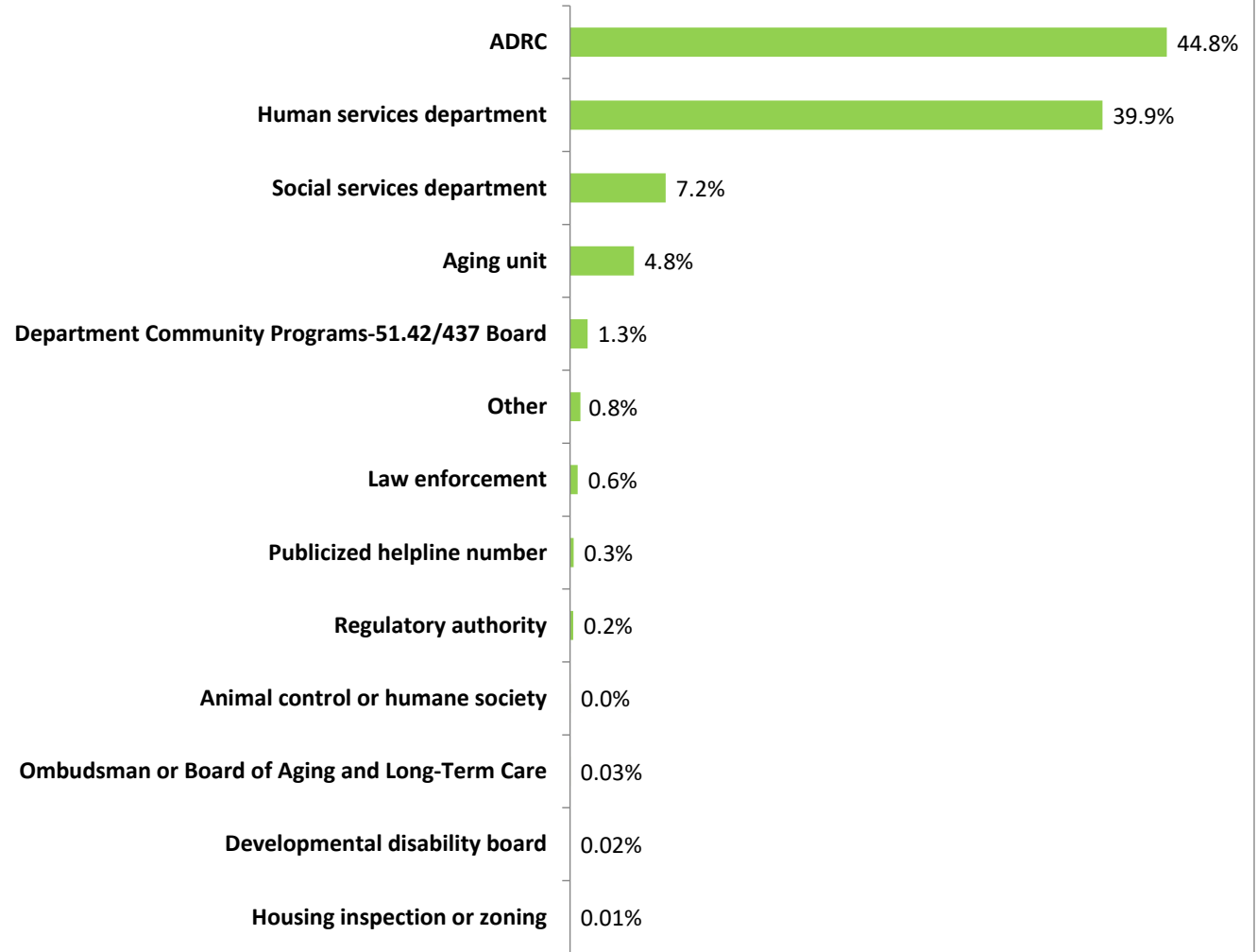


Call Received By:

	Number	Percent
ADRC	4,307	44.8%
Aging unit	462	4.8%
Animal control or humane society	4	0.0%
Department Community Programs-51.42/437 Board	127	1.3%
Developmental disability board	2	0.0%
Disab Rights WI (WCA)	1	0.0%
Housing inspection or zoning	1	0.0%
Human services department	3,843	39.9%
Law enforcement	56	0.6%
Ombudsman or Board of Aging and Long-Term Care	3	0.0%
Other	75	0.8%
Publicized helpline number	26	0.3%
Regulatory authority	24	0.2%
Social services department	690	7.2%
Total	9,621	0.0%



Call Received By:



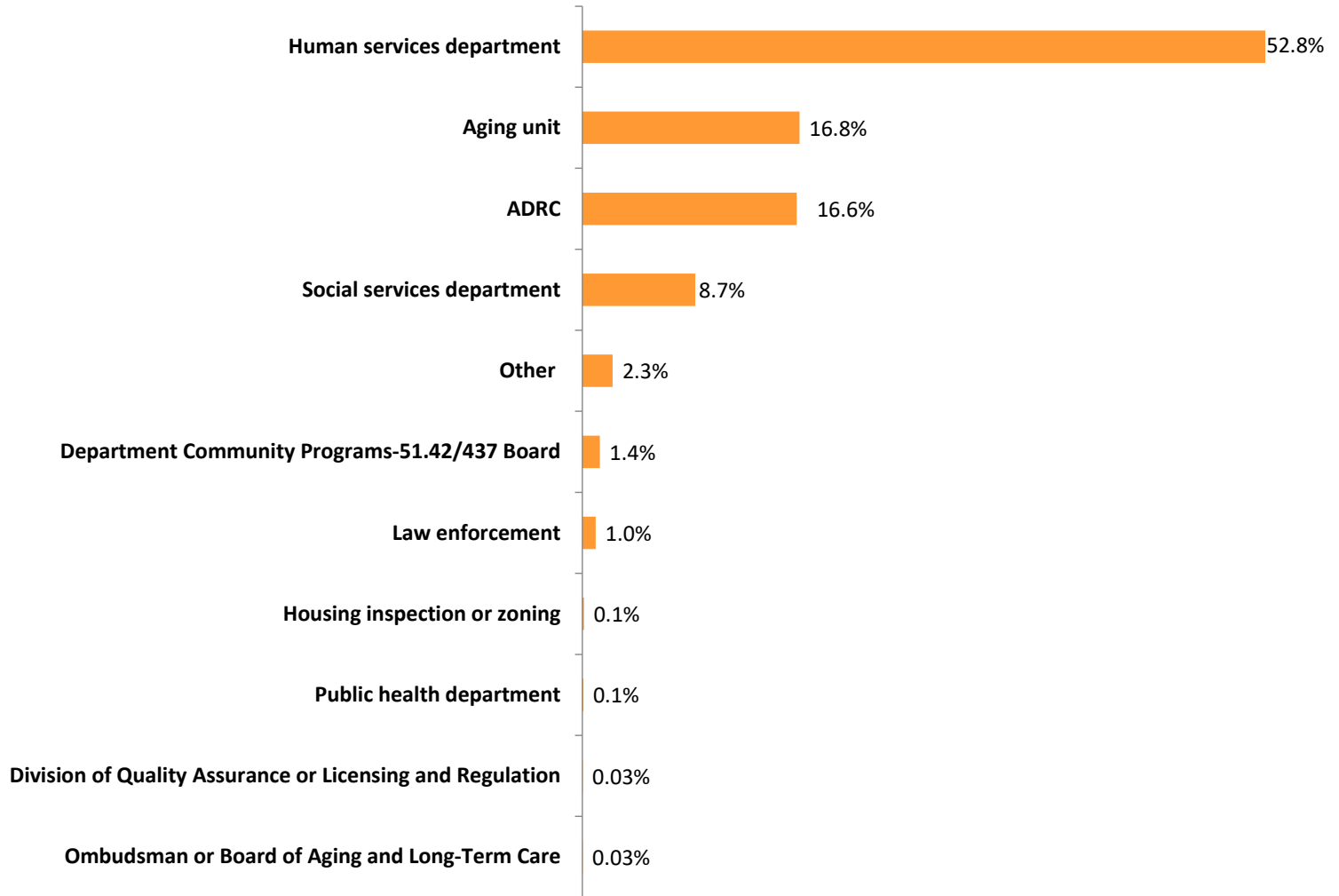


Initial Investigating Agency

	Number	Percent
Human services department	5,083	52.8%
Aging unit	1,617	16.8%
ADRC	1,596	16.6%
Social services department	841	8.7%
Other	225	2.3%
Department Community Programs-51.42/437 Board	130	1.4%
Law enforcement	99	1.0%
Housing inspection or zoning	12	0.1%
Public health department	7	0.1%
Animal control or humane society	3	0.0%
Ombudsman or Board of Aging and Long-Term Care	3	0.0%
Division of Quality Assurance or Licensing and Regulation	3	0.0%
Developmental Disability Board	2	0.0%
Wisconsin Department of Justice	0	0.0%
Total	9,621	100.0%



Initial Investigating Agency





Has Elder Adult at Risk Died?

	Number	Percent
No	373	73.6%
Yes	131	25.8%
Unknown	3	0.6%
Total	507	100.0%
<i>Note: Percents represent share of all life-threatening incidents.</i>		

Was Death Related to the Incident?

	Number	Percent
No	62	47.3%
Yes	45	34.4%
Unknown	24	18.3%
Total	131	100.0%
<i>Note: Percents represent share of all incidents involving a death.</i>		

Was Death Directly Caused by Incident?

	Number	Percent
No	13	28.9%
Yes	14	31.1%
Unknown	18	40.0%
Total	45	100.0%
<i>Note: Percents represent share of all incidents with death related to incident.</i>		



Elder Adult at Risk's Age

	Number	Percent
60-69 years	2,827	29.4%
70-79 years	3,502	36.4%
80-89 years	2,565	26.7%
90 years or more	727	7.6%
Total	9,621	100.0%

Elder Adult at Risk's Gender

	Number	Percent
Female	5,487	57.0%
Male	4,128	42.9%
Unknown	6	0.1%
Total	9,621	100.0%

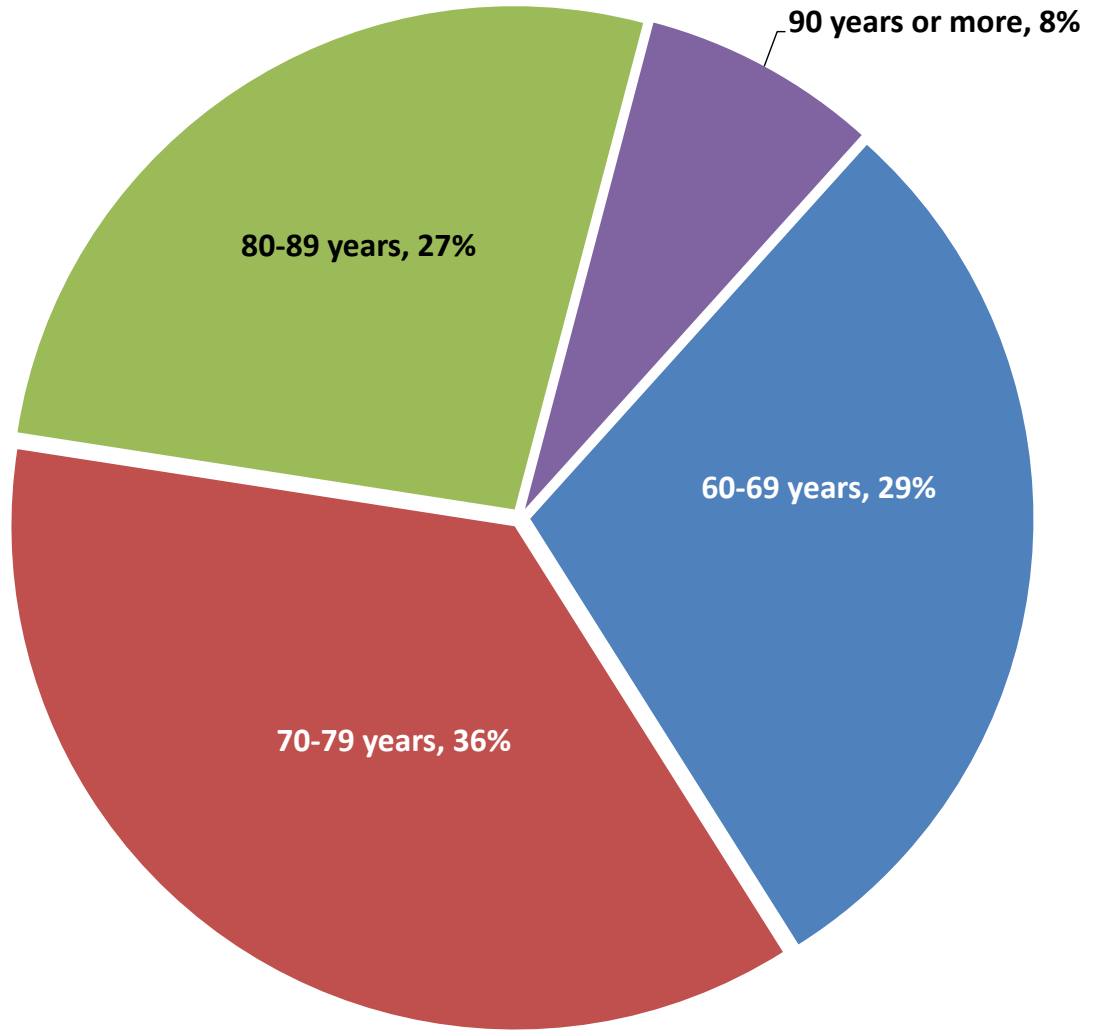
Elder Adult at Risk's Race

	Number	Percent
White	5,881	61.1%
Black or African American	585	6.1%
Native American or Alaska Native	101	1.0%
Asian	29	0.3%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	10	0.1%
Other race	212	2.2%
Not reported or unknown	2,803	29.1%
Total	9,621	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.



Elder Adult at Risk's Age



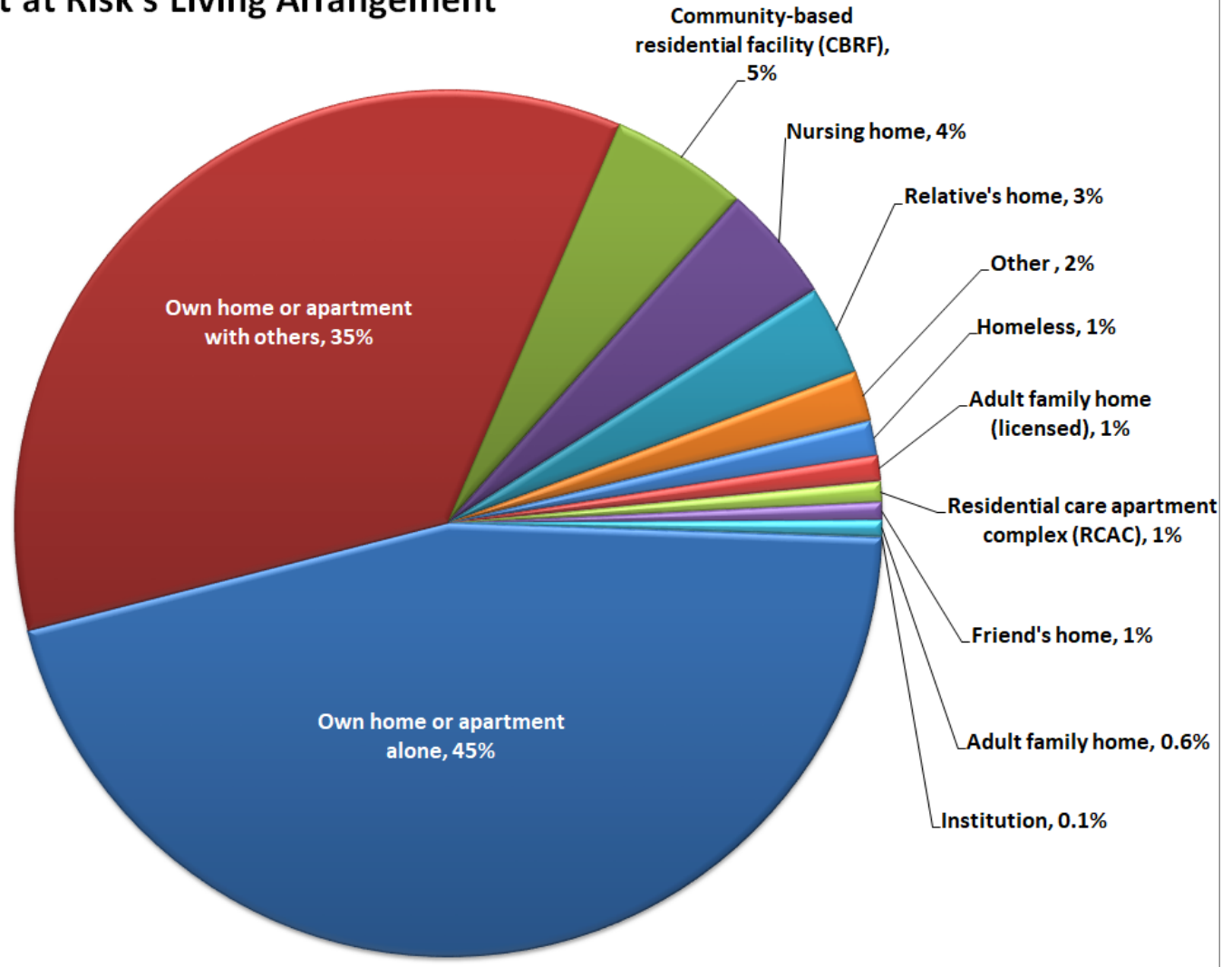


Elder Adult at Risk's Living Arrangement

	Number	Percent
Own home or apartment alone	4,372	45.4%
Own home or apartment with others	3,413	35.5%
Community-based residential facility (CBRF)	494	5.1%
Nursing home	420	4.4%
Relative's home	322	3.3%
Other	181	1.9%
Homeless	127	1.3%
Adult family home (licensed)	91	0.9%
Residential care apartment complex (RCAC)	73	0.8%
Friend's home	65	0.7%
Adult family home	55	0.6%
Institution	8	0.1%
Total	9,621	100.0%



Elder Adult at Risk's Living Arrangement





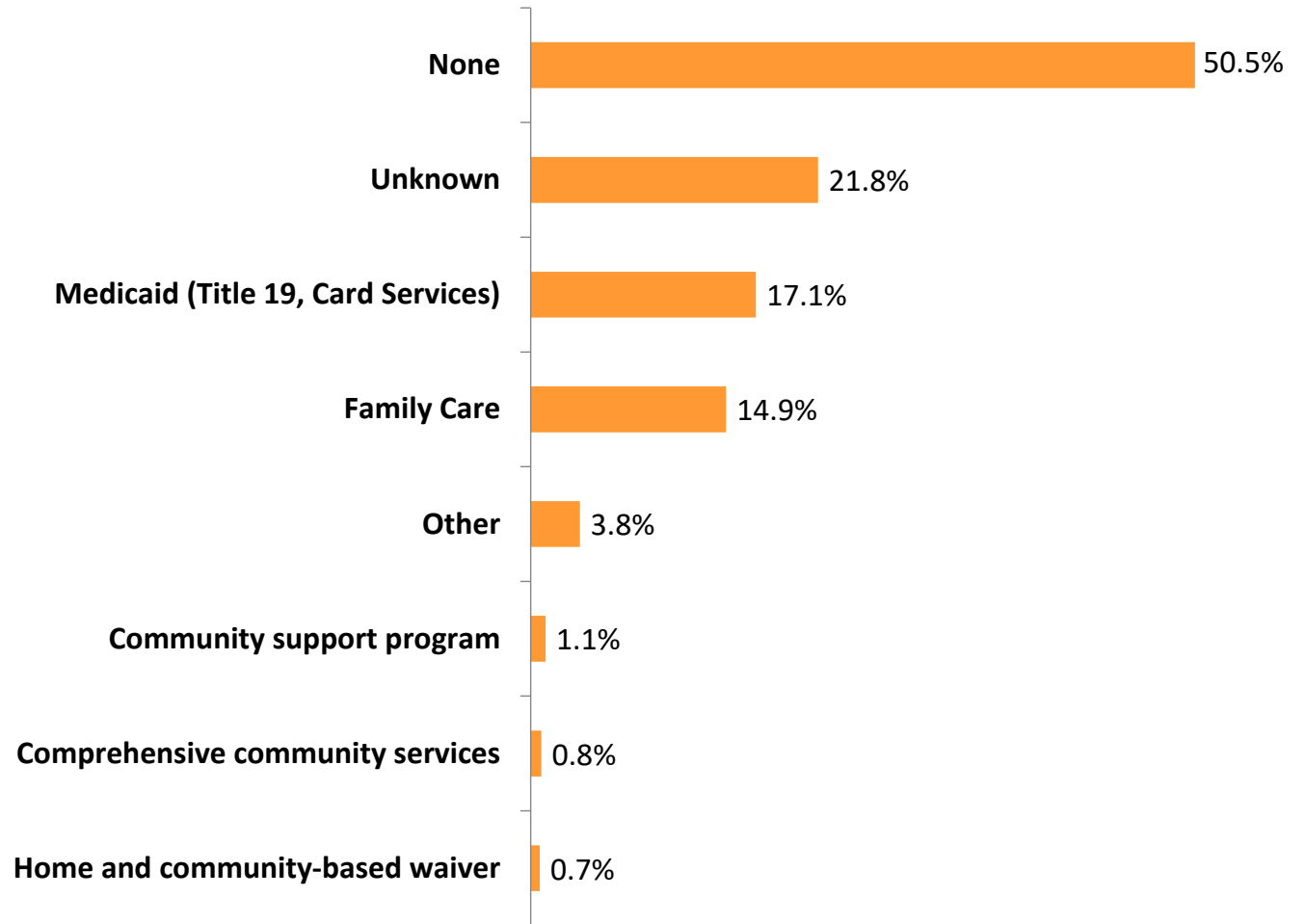
County and State-funded Programs That Have Served Elder Adults at Risk

	Number	Percent
None	4,856	50.5%
Unknown	2,101	21.8%
Medicaid (Title 19, Card Services)	1,646	17.1%
Family Care	1,429	14.9%
Other	361	3.8%
Community support program	109	1.1%
Comprehensive community services	78	0.8%
Home and community-based waiver	67	0.7%
Total	9,621	100.0%

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





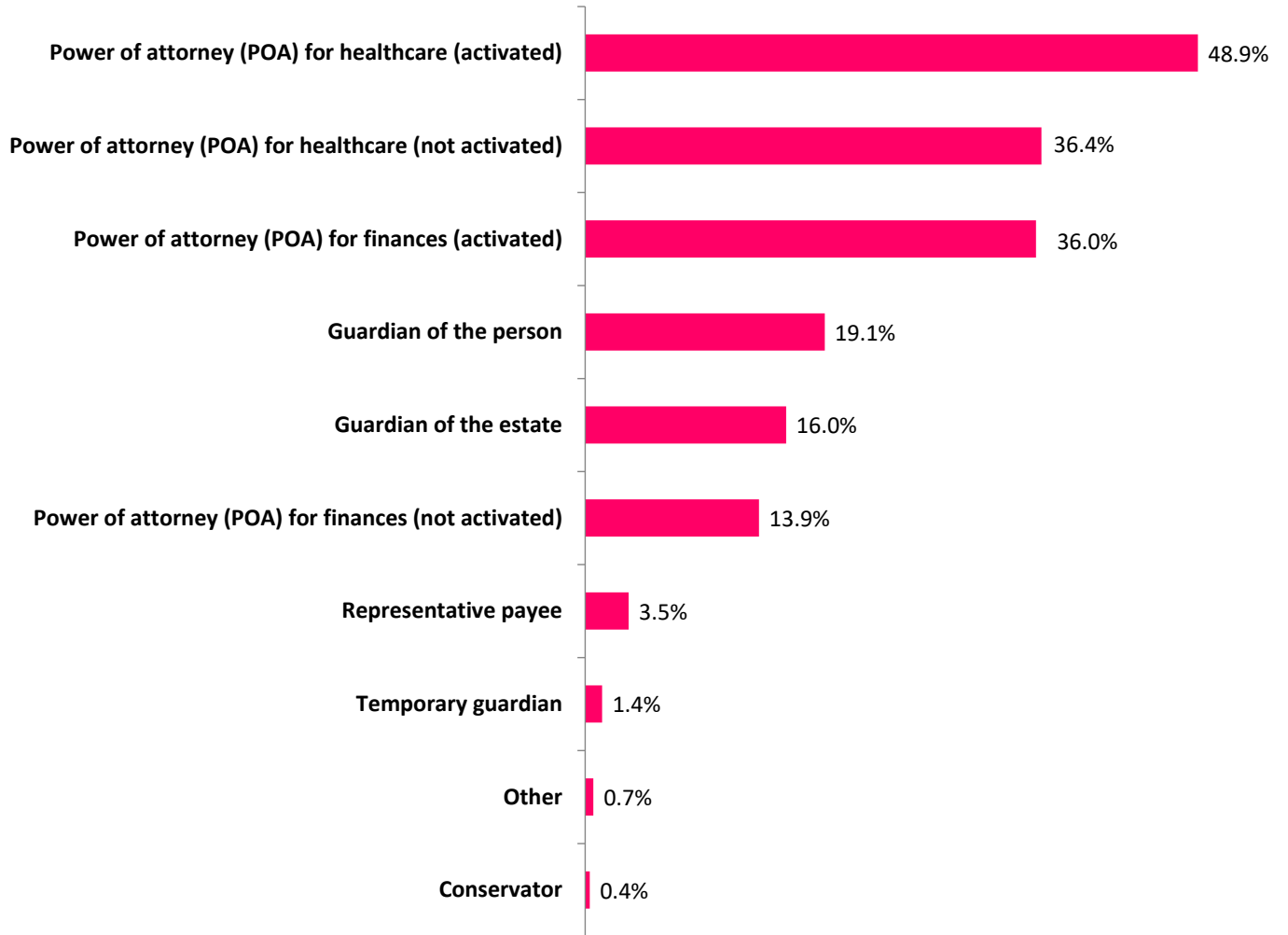
Does Elder Adult at Risk Have a Substitute Decision-Maker?		
	Number	Percent
No	5,144	53.5%
Yes	3,017	31.4%
Unknown	1,460	15.2%
Total	9,621	100.0%

Type(s) of Substitute Decision-Maker		
	Number	Percent
Conservator	10	0.4%
Guardian of the estate	438	16.0%
Guardian of the person	522	19.1%
Other	18	0.7%
Power of attorney (POA) for finances (activated)	982	36.0%
Power of attorney (POA) for finances (not activated)	379	13.9%
Power of attorney (POA) for healthcare (activated)	1,335	48.9%
Power of attorney (POA) for healthcare (not activated)	994	36.4%
Representative payee	95	3.5%
Temporary guardian	37	1.4%
Total	3,017	100.0%

Percents represent share of all those with any kind of substitute decision-maker (n=3,017). 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	3,655	38.0%
Dementia	2,157	22.4%
Mobility impaired	1,571	16.3%
Medically fragile	1,221	12.7%
Disoriented and confused	1,179	12.3%
Mental illness	1,138	11.8%
None of the listed characteristics	1,068	11.1%
Other medical condition	910	9.5%
Physical disability	744	7.7%
Diabetes	622	6.5%
Homebound	598	6.2%
Incontinent	539	5.6%
Alcohol abuse	496	5.2%
Other characteristic	445	4.6%
Challenging or dangerous behavior	437	4.5%
Stroke-related condition	360	3.7%
Unemployed	327	3.4%
Chronic mental illness	311	3.2%
Deaf or hard of hearing	243	2.5%
Morbidly obese	226	2.3%
Developmental disability	207	2.2%
Chronic alcoholic	196	2.0%
Blind or visually impaired	177	1.8%
Financial dependence: alleged abuser dependent on adult at risk	165	1.7%
Drug abuse	116	1.2%
Brain injury	95	1.0%
Communication disorder	71	0.7%
Financially dependent on abuser	70	0.7%
Limited English proficiency	26	0.3%
Functionally illiterate	12	0.1%
Total	9,621	100.0%

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

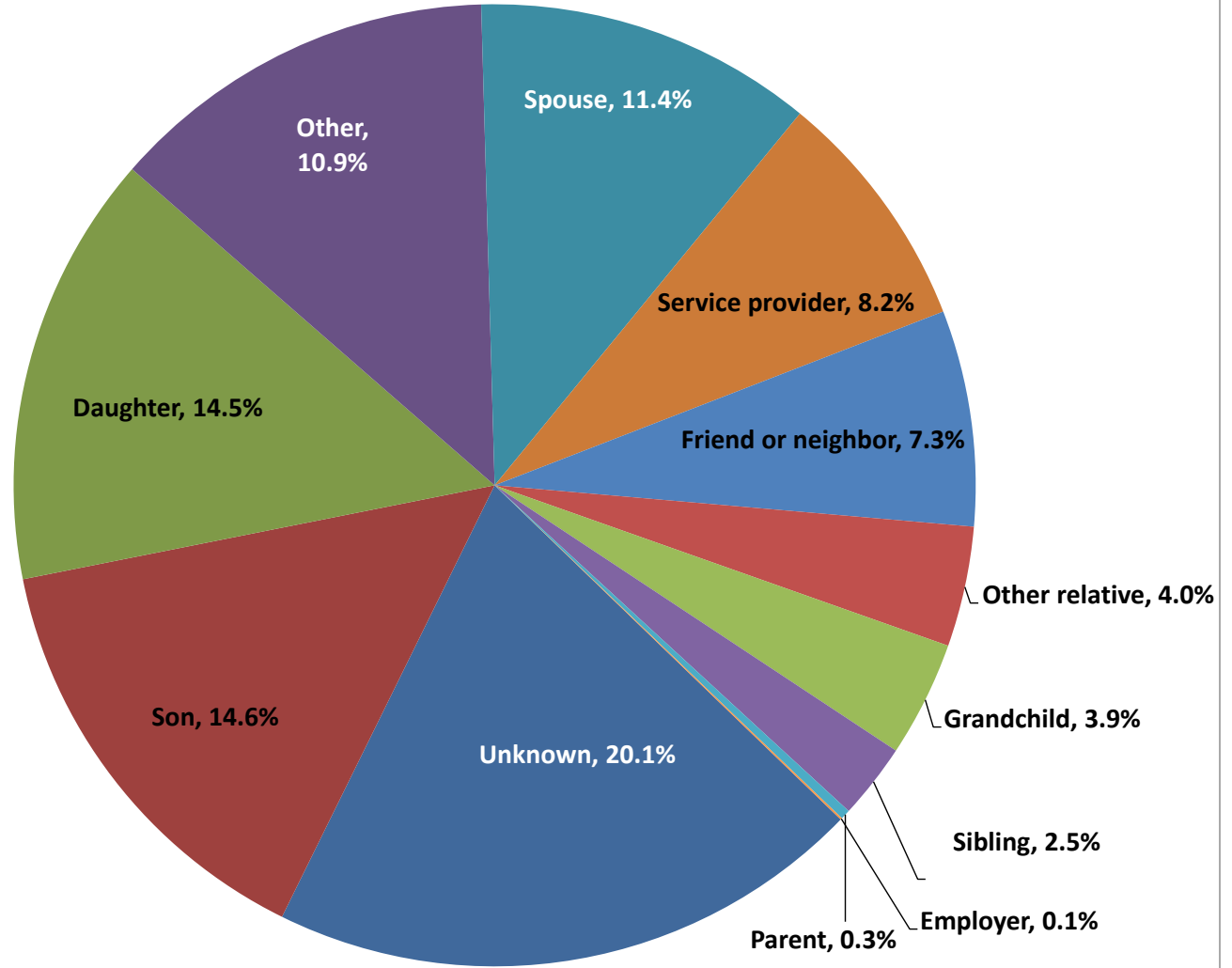
	Number	Percent
Female	1,991	38.3%
Male	1,898	36.5%
Unknown	1,309	25.2%
Total	5,198	100.0%

Alleged Abusers' Relationships to Elder Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Unknown	1,043	20.1%
Son	758	14.6%
Daughter	756	14.5%
Other	683	13.1%
Spouse	592	11.4%
Service provider	425	8.2%
Friend or neighbor	377	7.3%
Other relative	210	4.0%
Grandchild	202	3.9%
Sibling	132	2.5%
Parent	17	0.3%
Employer	3	0.1%
Total	5,198	100.0%



Alleged Abusers' Relationships to Elder Adult at Risk





Do Alleged Abusers Live with Elder Adult at Risk?

	Number	Percent
No	2,853	54.9%
Yes	1,847	35.5%
Unknown	498	9.6%
Total	5,198	100.0%

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

	Number	Percent
No	4,122	79.3%
Yes	1,076	20.7%
Total	5,198	100.0%



Alleged Abusers' Legal Status		
	Number	Percent
No legal status	3,040	58.5%
Unknown legal status	1,070	20.6%
Power of attorney (POA) for healthcare (activated)	514	9.9%
Power of attorney (POA) for finances (activated)	415	8.0%
Power of attorney (POA) for healthcare (not activated)	268	5.2%
Guardian of the person	115	2.2%
Guardian of the estate	103	2.0%
Power of attorney (POA) for finances (not activated)	96	1.8%
Other legal status	50	1.0%
Representative payee	27	0.5%
Temporary guardian	2	0.0%
Conservator	1	0.0%
Total	5,198	100.0%
<i>Percents represent share of all abusers who have this legal status. Multiple responses are allowed, so percents do not total 100%.</i>		



Alleged Abusers' Characteristics		
	Number	Percent
None of the listed characteristics	3,372	64.9%
Other characteristic	421	8.1%
Financial dependence: alleged abuser dependent on adult at risk	379	7.3%
Unemployed	285	5.5%
Mental illness	235	4.5%
Drug abuse	212	4.1%
Alcohol abuse	203	3.9%
Frail Elderly	172	3.3%
Challenging or dangerous behavior	116	2.2%
Dementia	77	1.5%
Physical disability	68	1.3%
Medically fragile	53	1.0%
Chronic mental illness	50	1.0%
Chronic alcoholic	49	0.9%
Financial dependence: adult at risk on abuser	48	0.9%
Other medical condition	47	0.9%
Mobility impaired	46	0.9%
Disoriented and confused	44	0.8%
Developmental disability	36	0.7%
Diabetes	28	0.5%
Morbidly Obese	25	0.5%
Stroke-related condition	20	0.4%
Deaf or hard of hearing	17	0.3%
Homebound	17	0.3%
Incontinent	9	0.2%
Blind or visually impaired	7	0.1%
Brain injury	7	0.1%
Limited English proficiency	6	0.1%
Communication disorder	3	0.1%
Functionally illiterate	1	0.0%
Total	5,198	100.0%
<i>Multiple responses were allowed so numbers do not add up to 100%.</i>		
<i>Percents refer to share of all alleged abusers.</i>		

**More than One Alleged Abuser?**

	Number	Percent
No, one alleged abuser only	4,951	95.2%
Yes	247	4.8%
Total	5,198	100.0%



Was Hurt or Harm Substantiated?

	Number	Percent
Substantiated	4,417	45.9%
Unsubstantiated	3,445	35.8%
Unable to substantiate	1,759	18.3%
Total	9,621	100.0%



Actions Taken to Assist Elder Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Services not needed	2,017	21.0%
Services offered-not accepted	1,942	20.2%
Services offered-some accepted	1,751	18.2%
Services offered-all accepted	1,303	13.5%
Investigation not accepted	681	7.1%
Guardian referral	655	6.8%
Referral made to other agency	625	6.5%
Outreach continues	580	6.0%
Protective services placement	511	5.3%
Other disposition	423	4.4%
Referral to law enforcement or Department of Justice	421	4.4%
Other legal action	291	3.0%
Referral to protection or advocacy agencies	152	1.6%
Referral to regulatory authority	135	1.4%
Response or investigation continues	93	1.0%
Referral to caregiver misconduct registry	87	0.9%
Mental health commitment	46	0.5%
Services needed are not available	38	0.4%
Referral to detoxification services	14	0.1%
Referral made to state agency	12	0.1%
Total	9,621	100.0%

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



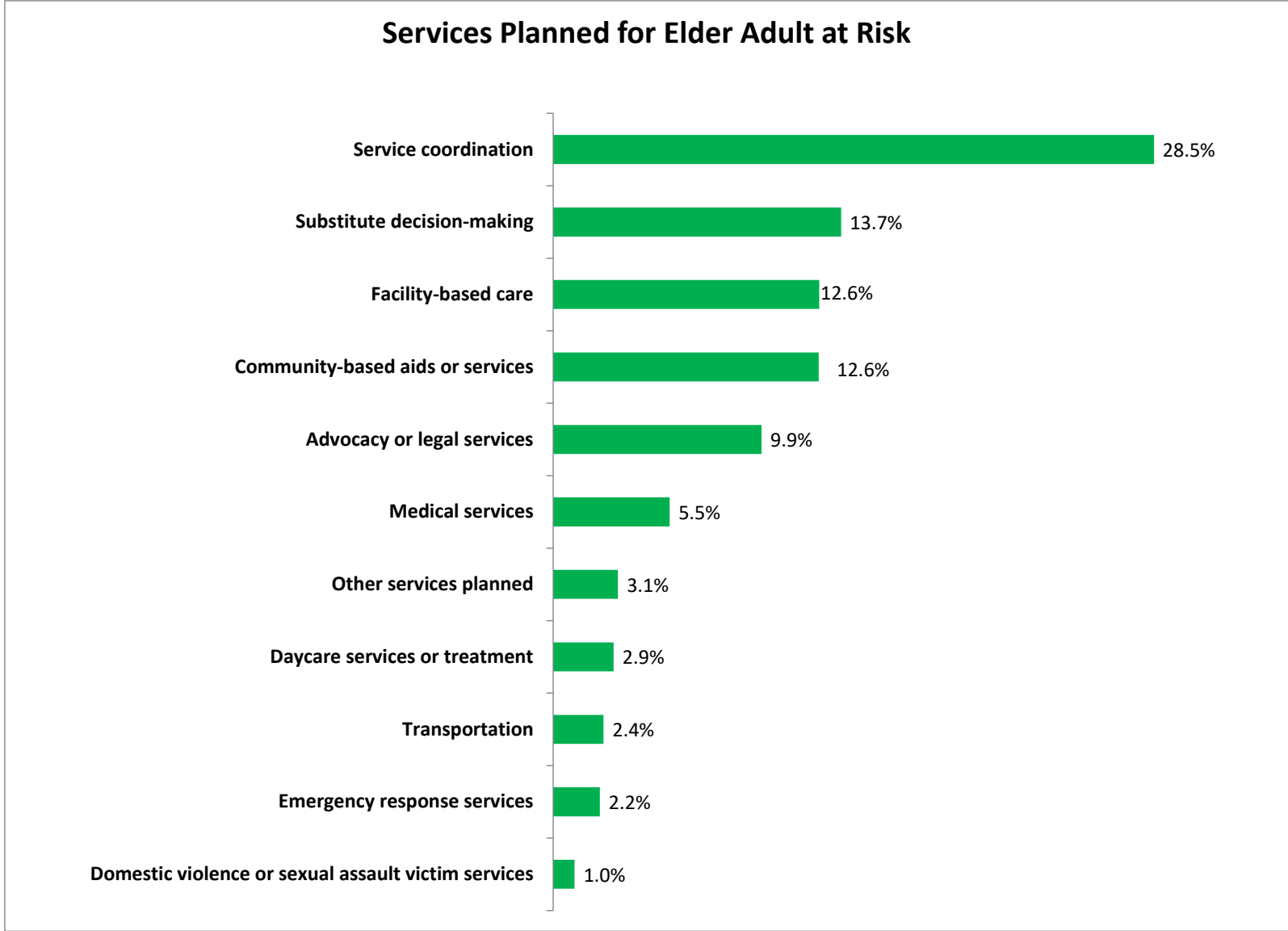
Services Planned for Elder Adult at Risk

	Number	Percent
Service coordination	2,744	28.5%
Substitute decision-making	1,315	13.7%
Facility-based care	1,215	12.6%
Community-based aids or services	1,213	12.6%
Advocacy or legal services	952	9.9%
Medical services	532	5.5%
Other services planned	296	3.1%
Daycare services or treatment	276	2.9%
Transportation	230	2.4%
Emergency response services	213	2.2%
Domestic violence or sexual assault victim services	98	1.0%
Total	9,621	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 Elder Adult at Risk





Services Planned for Alleged Abuser(s)

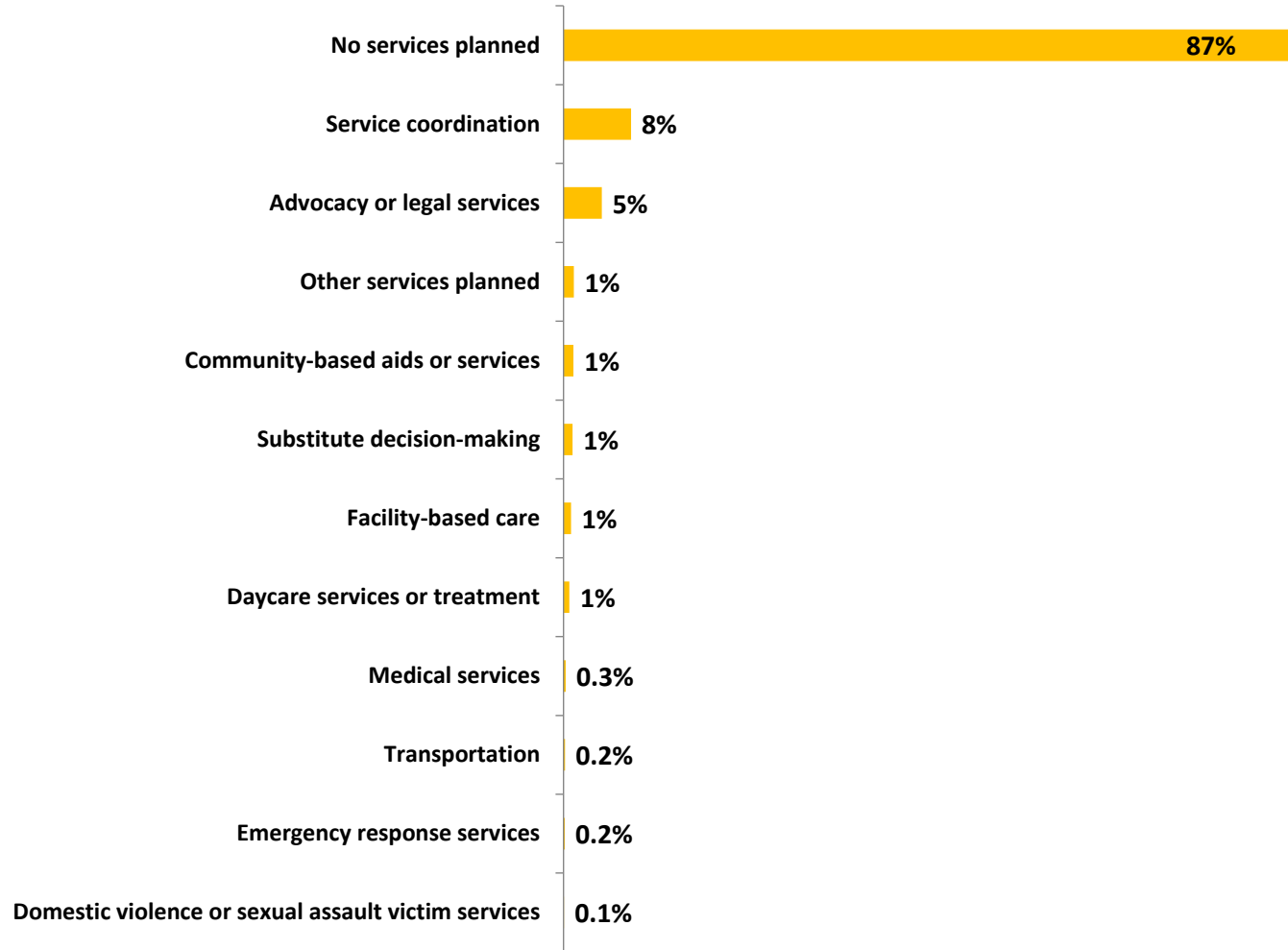
Service	Number	Percent
No services planned	3,978	87.3%
Service coordination	370	8.1%
Advocacy or legal services	210	4.6%
Other services planned	57	1.3%
Community-based aids or services	55	1.2%
Substitute decision-making	50	1.1%
Facility-based care	41	0.9%
Daycare services or treatment	32	0.7%
Medical services	12	0.3%
Transportation	8	0.2%
Emergency response services	7	0.2%
Domestic violence or sexual assault victim services	3	0.1%
Total	4,558	100.0%

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=4,558).



Services Plan for Alleged Abuser(s)





Contact Information

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Division of Public Health

Department of Health Services

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