It's not too late to stop the hurt and harm.

It is hard to let someone know that you think abuse or neglect is taking place.

Call your care team if you or someone you know is being abused, neglected or mistreated.

Your care team can help in many ways. They can help reduce or eliminate the danger and make things better. When you call, we will ask you:

- What happened
- When it happened
- Where it happened
- Is it still taking place

State laws protect people who report abuse, neglect or financial exploitation in good faith.

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 911.

Your Care Team

Care Manager

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Registered Nurse

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Freedom to Make Your Own Decisions

Some licensed professionals in Wisconsin must report abuse, neglect or financial exploitation if they think it is happening.

Wisconsin laws allow able adults to decide where and how they live. Adults may also decide whether they want professionals involved in their lives. Able adults may not refuse to have an abuse worker review their situation. However, they may refuse help that is offered.

A decision to interfere with an adult's right to make his or her own decisions must be made very carefully. The decision must be based on the belief that the adult is in a very harmful or dangerous situation. The problems must be so unsafe or risky that they override the usual right to be left alone.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Division of Long Term Care
Bureau of Managed Care
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Understanding Abuse, Neglect and Financial Exploitation

What are abuse, neglect and exploitation?

Abuse can happen in many ways. It can be physical, emotional, verbal or sexual. Abuse is willfully causing physical or emotional pain, injury or unreasonable confinement.

Neglect occurs when a caregiver fails to provide enough food, shelter, clothing, or medical or dental care. As a result, the person's physical or mental health is in significant danger.

Self-neglect is different from other types of abuse because it does not involve an abuser. Instead, it happens when a person is unable, or fails, to care for himself or herself and the person's physical or mental health is at risk. For example, the person does not have enough food, shelter, clothing, medical or dental care.

Financial exploitation is the misuse of another person's money or property.

Signs of Abuse

- Cuts, burns, bruises, broken bones or open wounds
- Inappropriate touch or sexual acts or actions
- Verbal threats (aggressive, demeaning, harassing)
- Inappropriate use or misuse of medication
- Medical treatment or research without permission
- Separation from family and friends
- Unwanted restraint, such as being tied to furniture

Signs of Neglect or Self-neglect

- Lack of enough food or water to live on
- Poor personal care and hygiene
- Lack of medical aids (glasses, hearing aids, dentures, medicine, walker, wheelchair)
- Lack of clean clothing
- Home that is cluttered, dirty and needs repair
- Home that has fire and safety hazards
- Home without proper facilities (stove, refrigerator, heat, cooling, plumbing, electricity)
- Untreated bed sores

Signs of Financial Exploitation

- Money or valuables missing
- Unpaid bills even though the person has enough money to pay them
- Sudden transfer of money to a caregiver or family member
- Money, property or other assets used, taken or sold without permission
- Caregiver or family member controls money but does not use the money to buy what is needed to meet daily needs
- Unexplained changes in powers of attorney, wills or other legal documents