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Social Abuse and Neglect

The World Health Organisation defines Elder Abuse as "a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person".

Self-neglect is not considered abuse by the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit. The respect of a person's rights to make their own decisions on matters affecting their lives is of paramount importance to the EAPU. However, careful consideration is needed to determine whether the self-neglect is a life-style decision or is unintentional due to lack of access to services or some form of dementia or mental illness.

The EAPU provides a confidential telephone **Helpline: 1300 651 192** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Service funded by:



What is Social Abuse?

Social abuse involves preventing a person from having social contact with friends or family or access to social activities

Examples:

- Moving the person far away, or cutting the person off from the support of friends or family members
- Not allowing the person to use the telephone or monitoring his/her calls
- Not allowing the person to socialise or meet neighbours
- Claiming that the person's friends or family are "interfering"

What is Neglect?

Neglect is the failure of a carer to provide the necessities of life to a person for whom they are caring. Neglect can be intentional or unintentional (ANPEA).

Examples:

- Inadequate food and drink, which may result in; malnutrition, weight loss, wasting and dehydration. The person may have constipation or fecal impaction.
- Isolation, lack of mental, physical, social or cultural contact/stimulation.
- Inadequate supervision particularly when caring for someone with a dementia, the person is abandoned or left unattended for long periods or locked in the house without any supervision.
- Lacking aids such as glasses, dentures, hearing aids
- Over sedated or Under sedated
- Abandoned or unattended for long periods



UnitingCare Community Values Compassion | Respect | Justice | Working Together | Leading through Learning

UnitingCare Community Services Lifeline | Child and Family Care | Counselling | Crisis Support | Disability Support | Social Inclusion