

## Preventing and Responding to Elder Abuse: How the Minnesota Elder Justice Center Can Help!

Presented for the Minnesota Gerontological Society Annual Conference  
Friday, April 22, 2016 – Brooklyn Center, Minnesota



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## Welcome to the Minnesota Gerontological Society Conference!

This afternoon, we hope to:

- ▶ Review definitions and statistics
- ▶ Introduce the Elder Justice Center
- ▶ Learn more about the MAARC common entry point
- ▶ Explore national priorities
- ▶ Discuss the development of MEJC projects
- ▶ Identify priorities for current and future action and advocacy



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## Elder Abuse: toward a definition...

- ▶ In general, elder abuse is any knowing, intentional, or negligent act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm or a serious risk of harm to an older adult.
- ▶ Defined by age, relationship, type of abuse
- ▶ Victims are often on a continuum from active to having various medical, cognitive, mobility issues
- ▶ 2/3 of perpetrators of elder abuse are family members, trusted individuals and/or caregivers



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### Abuse in Later Life as a Subset of Elder Abuse, Domestic Violence, and Sexual Assault



NCALL, OYW (2012)

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### Prevalence

- ▶ 1,000,000 – 2,000,000 adults in later life in U.S. are victims of abuse<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ 1 in 10 persons over the age 60 are victims of elder abuse<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ Victims of elder financial abuse in U.S. lose close to \$3 Billion each year<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>National Center of Elder Abuse-2005 Elder Abuse Prevalence and Incidence

<sup>2</sup>National Institute of Justice: Elder Abuse as a Criminal Problem

<sup>3</sup>Blancato, Robert: Violence Against Older Women and The Elder Justice Act, 1/04/12

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### Growth of Older Adults

- ▶ The Administration on Aging expects that by 2030, the U.S. population over age 65 will have doubled from 2000, with older adults representing 19% of the population.

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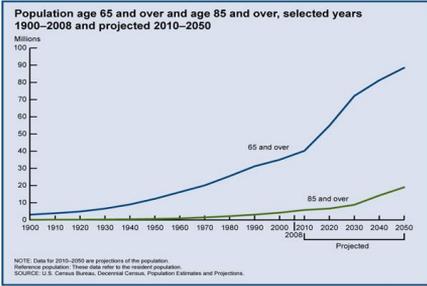
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## Growth of Older Adults



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## Types of Abuse

- ▶ Domestic Violence Late in Life
- ▶ Physical abuse
- ▶ Emotional abuse
- ▶ Sexual abuse
- ▶ Spiritual abuse
- ▶ Financial Exploitation
- ▶ Neglect
- ▶ Self Neglect

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## Abuse Warning Signs

- ▶ Physical – bruises, pressure marks, broken bones, burns, weight loss, malnutrition, poor hygiene
- ▶ Financial – abrupt transfers, changes to Power of Attorney or will, unpaid bills, valuable items removed from elder's home
- ▶ Spiritual – elder prevented from participating in ceremonial and spiritual events
- ▶ Changes in Behavior – strained relationships between caregiver and elderly person, withdrawal from normal activities, unusual depression, change in alertness

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### What can we do when we suspect abuse is happening?

- ▶ Share our suspicions – talk to someone – make a report...
- ▶ To emergency services
- ▶ To law enforcement
- ▶ To adult protection
- ▶ To a Tribal Court
- ▶ To an advocacy organization

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### The Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center

- ▶ MN DHS single common entry point for maltreatment reports
- ▶ Previously, reports received by each county individually (sometime to multiple contacts within individual counties)
- ▶ MAARC accepts voluntary and mandatory reports

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### The Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center

Mandated reporters are professionals or professional's delegate identified by law who **MUST** make a report if they have reason to believe that the abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult has occurred. "Mandated reporter" means a professional or professional's delegate while engaged in:

- Social services
- Law enforcement
- Education
- Direct care
- Licensed health and human services professionals ([MS 214.01, subdivision 2](#))
- Employment in a licensed facility
- Medical examiner or coroner activities

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## The Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center

A **vulnerable adult** can be anyone over age 18 who:

- ▶ Has a physical, mental or emotional disorder that makes it difficult for the person to care for themselves without help and to protect themselves from maltreatment (functional definition)
- ▶ Is in a hospital, nursing home, transitional care unit, assisted living, housing with services, board and care, foster care or other licensed care facility (categorical definition)
- ▶ Receives services such as home care, day services, personal care assistance or other licensed services (categorical definition)

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## The Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center

**Maltreatment** includes:

- ▶ Abuse, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse, use of restraints, involuntary seclusion or punishment
- ▶ Neglect, including failure to provide necessary food, shelter, clothing, health care or supervision because of neglect by a caregiver or because the vulnerable adult cannot meet their own needs
- ▶ Financial exploitation, including theft or withholding of money or property and/or use of money or property not for the vulnerable adult's benefit.

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## The Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center

- ▶ Began receiving reports on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015.
- ▶ Single toll-free number: **844-880-1574**
  - ▶ Available 24 hours per day
  - ▶ Immediately notifies county agency (EPS); law enforcement (crime); Med Ex, Ombudsman for MH (suspicious death)
  - ▶ Refers directly to Lead Investigative Agency
- ▶ Online reporting for mandatory reporters

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### MAARC Feedback:

- ▶ Note: Federally certified SNFs; NFs; hospitals with swing beds have additional federal reporting requirements
- ▶ Feedback to: [dhs.adultprotection@state.mn.us](mailto:dhs.adultprotection@state.mn.us)



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### How can we prevent elder abuse?

- ▶ This is a question many people around the country are working to answer...including the Minnesota Elder Justice Center!



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### The Minnesota Elder Justice Center

- ▶ Center History:
  - ▶ Merges the former Vulnerable Adult Justice Project and the Minnesota SAFE Elders Initiative
  - ▶ Incorporated February 2014, launched October 1, 2014



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## The Minnesota Elder Justice Center

- ▶ **Mission** - Mobilizing communities to prevent and alleviate abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of elders and vulnerable adults.
- ▶ **Focus on:**
  - ▶ Public Awareness
  - ▶ Professional Education
  - ▶ Public Policy
  - ▶ Direct Service

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## The Minnesota Elder Justice Center

Our website:

[www.elderjusticemn.org](http://www.elderjusticemn.org)

Resources available there:

- ▶ Downloadable, printable handouts, discussion guides, and information about our presentations
- ▶ 26 minute documentary and DVD "Extras" – [Elder Victims: Abused, Exploited, Alone](#)
  - ▶ 26 minute documentary available free of charge through [www.elderjusticemn.org](http://www.elderjusticemn.org), includes discussion guide and facilitator notes
  - ▶ Co-produced by Twin Cities Public Television and the Minnesota S.A.F.E. Elders Initiative

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## The Minnesota Elder Justice Center

Our website:

[www.elderjusticemn.org](http://www.elderjusticemn.org)

More resources available there:

- ▶ Prosecutor's Trial Notebook
- ▶ S.A.F.E. MN smartphone app

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### The Minnesota Elder Justice Center

- ▶ Also: **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day: June 15, 2016**



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### World Elder Abuse Awareness Day:

- ▶ Internationally recognized: many different regional events and conferences
- ▶ Minnesota World Elder Abuse Awareness Day events held across the state and region including tracks at other conferences.

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### The Elder Justice Roadmap

- ▶ The Roadmap, created by the National Center on Elder Abuse in collaboration with leaders in the field, identifies “the elder justice field’s most urgent needs as well as threshold barriers and challenges that must be overcome to address them.” (Roadmap, 7)

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### The Elder Justice Roadmap

▶ The Roadmap identifies the “Top Five Priorities” pertaining to efforts to prevent elder abuse:

1. Awareness
2. Brain Health
3. Caregiving
4. Economics
5. Resources

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### The Elder Justice Roadmap

▶ The Roadmap identifies elder abuse as “a problem with solutions.” To achieve these solutions will require conversation and multidisciplinary collaboration.

▶ Some responses are simple; others more complex. The Roadmap identifies that there’s a role for everyone...

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### MEJC Curricula projects:

The National Center on Elder Abuse contracted with the Minnesota Elder Justice Center to produce curriculum tailored to rural, outstate and agricultural communities; and curriculum tailored members of faith communities.

▶ Introductory curriculum deliver-able by non-professionals, and tailored to a lay audience.

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**MEJC Curricula projects:**

- ▶ Specific issues arose in stakeholder workgroups and focus groups:
  - ▶ Isolation (geographic and social)
    - ▶ Seasonal challenges
  - ▶ Service availability
  - ▶ Privacy



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**MEJC Curricula projects:**

- ▶ Specific issues arose in stakeholder workgroups and focus groups:
  - ▶ Multidisciplinary collaboration
    - ▶ Investigation and prosecution
  - ▶ Identifying and addressing family financial exploitation



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**MEJC Curricula projects:**

- ▶ Other issues?
- ▶ Specific questions or observations you'd like addressed in public or professional awareness materials?
- ▶ Specific issues to be incorporated into our MN-specific materials?
- ▶ Major elder justice challenges facing your communities?



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### MEJC Curricula projects:

- ▶ What would you like to highlight as the particular strengths of your communities?

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### Other projects...

- ▶ Legal Workshops
- ▶ Case study database
  - ▶ Individual stories and experiences

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### How can we be of greatest service to you in your work?

- ▶ What are your “big picture” needs or ideas?
- ▶ What are your “day-to-day” needs or ideas?
- ▶ Are there notable gaps or needs in services we currently provide to older or vulnerable adults?
- ▶ What are your greatest sources of frustration in delivering services to older or vulnerable adults, either as a professional, a volunteer, a caregiver, family member or friend?
- ▶ What solutions do you envision in answer to those frustrations?

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### Additional Resources

- ▶ National Center on Elder Abuse: [www.ncea.acl.gov](http://www.ncea.acl.gov)
- ▶ National Indigenous Elders Justice Initiative: [www.nieji.org](http://www.nieji.org)
- ▶ Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center: [www.miwrc.org](http://www.miwrc.org)
- ▶ National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life: [www.ncall.us](http://www.ncall.us)
- ▶ White House Conference on Aging: [www.whitehouseconferenceonaging.gov](http://www.whitehouseconferenceonaging.gov)
- ▶ Senior LinkAge: [www.mnaging.net](http://www.mnaging.net)
- ▶ MN Help: [www.mnhelp.info](http://www.mnhelp.info)
- ▶ National Center for the Prevention of Elder Abuse: [www.preventelderabuse.org](http://www.preventelderabuse.org)
- ▶ Consumer Financial Protection Bureau: [www.cfpb.gov](http://www.cfpb.gov)
- ▶ Minnesota Department of Commerce: [www.mn.gov/commerce](http://www.mn.gov/commerce)

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### Road trip! Let's travel together down the road toward elder justice...

Thank you for your time and attention.

#### Questions?

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