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As a Result of This Training, Participants Will Be Better Able to:

- Define sexual abuse in later life
- Recognize unique issues for older victims

Sexual Abuse in Later Life

- Any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of an older adult
- Victim is 50 years of age or older
Sexual Abuse in Later Life

Statistics around sexual violence later in life are thought to be serious underestimates, and reliable data is not yet available.

In the community, older victims of sexual abuse were violated most often by spouses/partners. Acierno, et al., (2010).

In facilities, employees responsible for care (43%) or other residents (41%) were most likely offenders. Ramsey-Klawsnik, et al., (2008).

Elder sexual abuse is often embedded in a pattern of multifaceted elder abuse, whether it occurs in domestic or institutional settings. Ramsey-Klawsnik, (2009).
Sexual Abuse in a Family

- Sexual abuse by a spouse or partner
- Incest such as abuse by an adult child or grandchild

Miss Mary
Unique Issues

- Incestuous sexual abuse may add to shame & self-blame for victims
- May feel need to protect perpetrator if it is an adult child or grandchild
- System may be less responsive to older victim making a report
Unique Issues

- Male victims may not be believed or may have additional shame
- Victims who have dementia may not be believed or seen as credible witnesses
- Challenges of making a report in a facility setting
- Power imbalances may make it difficult for victims to report or seek help
- Fear of retaliation

Additional Issues to Consider

- Less likely to have strong support system
- Ageism creates environment where older victims are less likely to be believed or taken seriously
- Increased risk of injury and/or infections
- Hearing impairment and/or physical limitations may make forensic exam difficult
Summary

- Sexual abuse in later life is seriously underreported
- Older victims of sexual abuse are less likely to be believed
- Unique issues exist for older survivors of sexual assault

Video Presenters

- **Sue Hall Dreher**
  Consultant and former director at Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine
- **Karla Vierthaler**
  Lifespan Project Manager at the National Sexual Violence Resource Center
Special Appreciation

To Miss Mary, Al, and his family for the courage to tell their story so others may benefit.

Thank You

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- www.terranova.org
Staying Connected to NCALL and Other Advocates

- Sign up for our enewsletter: [http://oi.vresp.com/?fid=03fcc93262](http://oi.vresp.com/?fid=03fcc93262)
- Join our listserv for advocates serving older survivors: [ncall@ncall.us](mailto:ncall@ncall.us)
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