Domestic Violence in Later Life:  
An Overview for Health Care Providers

Bonnie Brandl, MSW  
Deborah L. Horan, MSW

SUMMARY. Domestic violence is a significant problem that adversely affects the health and safety of millions of women throughout their lifespan. Most cases of what is considered elder abuse occurs at home rather than in institutions, and the evidence suggests that only 1 in 5 cases are recognized. Frequently the perpetrator is a spouse, adult child, or other family member. Given the demographics of aging women and their longer life expectancies, clinicians are increasingly likely to see patients whose injuries or poor health status are caused or affected by abusive relationships. Improving the ability of physicians to identify domestic violence is an important skill needed for establishing comprehensive intervention and prevention efforts. In addition to conducting universal screening of all female patients, using clinical and behavioral indicators is a critical component of the intervention. [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <getinfo@haworthpressinc.com> Website: <http://www.HaworthPress.com> © 2002 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]

KEYWORDS. Elder abuse, domestic violence, domestic abuse, health care

Bonnie Brandl is Project Coordinator for the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL), Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 307 South Paterson Street, Suite #1, Madison, WI 53703-3041 (E-mail: bonnie@wcadv.org). Deborah L. Horan is Manager of Special Issues, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 409 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20024.


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| Table 1: Types and Presentations of Elder Abuse |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Abuse</th>
<th>Presentations and Definitions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse</td>
<td>Physical assault, pain, injury, and physical coercion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Abuse</td>
<td>Verbal abuse, humiliation, and emotional coercion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Abuse</td>
<td>Unauthorized financial transactions, theft, and exploitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>Failure to provide necessary care, undernutrition, and dehydration</td>
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</table>

**Definitions and Dynamics of Elder Abuse**

**Elder Abuse** occurs when an adult, either alone or with others, imposes pain or suffering on an older person. This can happen through physical, psychological, or financial means. Elder abuse can take many forms, including:**

- **Physical Abuse:** This involves actions that cause physical harm, such as hitting, pushing, or burning.
- **Psychological Abuse:** This involves actions that cause emotional harm, such as name-calling, or witholding love.
- **Financial Abuse:** This involves actions that cause financial harm, such as stealing or misusing money.
- **Neglect:** This involves actions that cause harm through neglect, such as withholding medical care or providing inadequate nutrition.

**Domestic Violence and Health Care:**

Domestic violence can take many forms, including physical, psychological, and financial abuse. It can have a significant impact on the health of victims, including:

- **Physical Health:** Domestic violence can lead to physical injuries, such as bruises, fractures, and concussions.
- **Mental Health:** Domestic violence can lead to mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD.
- **Financial Impact:** Domestic violence can lead to financial hardship, including loss of employment and increased medical costs.

**Prevention Strategies:**

- **Education:** Raising awareness about domestic violence and its impact on health can help prevent it.
- **Support Services:** Providing access to support services, such as counseling and legal assistance, can help victims.
- **Policy Changes:** Implementing policies that support victims, such as increased funding for domestic violence programs, can help prevent it.

**Conclusion:**

Domestic violence is a serious issue that affects the health and well-being of victims. By understanding the dynamics and prevention strategies, we can work towards creating a safer and healthier environment for everyone.
TABLE 2. Behavioral Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fearfulness</td>
<td>Constantly in fear of violating the victim's safety, family, or property.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>Physical or verbal threats to the victim or others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>Attempts to isolate the victim from others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Attempts to control the victim's decisions or activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploitation</td>
<td>Attempts to control the victim's finances or personal belongings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment</td>
<td>Constantly harass the victim or others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invasiveness</td>
<td>Attempts to invade the victim's personal space or belongings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seclusion</td>
<td>Trying to prevent the victim from leaving or contacting others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IDENTIFICATION THROUGH UNIVERSAL SCREENING

(Pillmamer & Finkelhor 1989; Padamsee 1979; Viven 1996)

Domestic violence and health care providers should be aware of the possibility of abuse in any domestic setting, including the workplace, and should be prepared to respond to such situations. Health care providers have a responsibility to recognize and respond to abuse in all its forms. This includes the recognition of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Health care providers should be alert to signs of abuse and should be prepared to provide care to victims of domestic violence. This includes the provision of emotional support, medical care, and legal assistance. Health care providers should be prepared to refer victims to appropriate resources and to support victims in their efforts to obtain safety and freedom from abuse. Health care providers should also be prepared to address the needs of family members and friends of victims of domestic violence.

When abuse is suspected, it is important for health care providers to take steps to ensure the safety of the victim and their family. This includes the provision of emergency care, as well as ongoing support and resources. Health care providers should be prepared to work with victims to develop safety plans and to assist them in obtaining the necessary resources to ensure their safety.

Domestic Violence and Health Care: Policies and Prevention

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HEALTH CARE PROVIDER RESPONSE

It's always a good idea to discuss anyone's concern about possible domestic violence with their health care provider. A good discussion is an ongoing process that can improve significantly the quality of care and reduce the risk of future violence. The health care provider can also be helpful in determining the overall condition of any patients and helping to prevent further incidents. All patients are encouraged to bring up any concerns about their health care provider and to discuss any potential issues they may be facing. Providers should also ask about any concerns and discuss how they can help address them.

COMPETENCY

Even if they do not take action immediately, it is important to leave open the possibility of future discussions. One way to maintain this openness is to discuss the possibility of domestic violence with the patient. This discussion should take place in a private setting and can help prevent further incidents. If a patient is found to have a history of violence, they should be referred to a professional for further evaluation and treatment. Providers should also ensure that patients are aware of their rights and options and encourage them to seek help if necessary.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HEALTH CARE: POLICIES AND PREVENTION

Domestic violence can have a significant impact on a person's health and well-being. It is important for providers to be aware of the signs of domestic violence and to take appropriate action to intervene. This includes providing support and resources to patients who may be in danger.

BOSSING, MADISON, AND BEAVERTON, OREGON

Domestic violence can also affect the patient's ability to provide care. Providers should be aware of the potential impact of domestic violence on a patient's health and well-being and should be prepared to address these issues. This includes providing appropriate referrals and resources to patients who may need additional support.

FAMILY MEMBER PATIENTS SHOULD BE ADVISED THAT A POSITIVE RESPONSE
PLAN FOR SAFETY

Ensure confidentiality.

Security planning is an ongoing process. Ideally, the health care provider should document an outline of the following:

- Health care professionals, investigators, and others involved in the medical setting.
- Family members or friends who are present at the scene.
- The patient's needs and preferences.
- Any concerns or queries the patient may have.
- Any relevant medical history or previous treatment.

Confidentiality is a key aspect of health care planning. Health care providers are responsible for ensuring confidentiality so that patient information is protected.

Document and photograph injuries.

Photographs of injuries can be helpful in documenting evidence of abuse. It is important to document any injuries that the patient may have sustained, including any marks, bruises, or other signs of trauma. These documents should be maintained in a safe and secure manner, and any relevant medical personnel should be notified.

Offer supportive messages.

By offering support, providers can help victims feel safe, respected, and respected. They can provide emotional support and assistance in making decisions about their health and safety. It is important to encourage victims to seek help and to provide them with resources for support and assistance. This can include counseling, legal advice, and other forms of assistance.


DANGEROUS INTERVENTIONS

The following actions should be done if the woman is pregnant.

HONOR HER DECISIONS

Some women avoid seeking help because they make difficult choices.

The decision is an important part of their life. While some pregnant women may feel stressed and scared, others may feel overjoyed. The decision is a personal one and should be respected.

REFERENCES

References should be used in all counseling, especially for the elderly. When counseling, the counselor should consider the woman's cultural background and her experience.

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HEALTH CARE SYSTEM RESPONSE

References

Health care. Family violence also is consistent with the provision of high quality health care. Family violence affects a wide range of health care providers and patients, including family members. Family violence can affect the quality of life and health care providers can affect the quality of patient's lives. Other family members. Health care providers can affect the quality of life and health care providers can affect the quality of patient's lives.

Conclusion

Family violence. Join the effort to improve health care organizations to eliminate violence. Participate in local or statewide efforts to improve health care organizations to eliminate violence. Participate in local or statewide efforts to improve health care organizations to eliminate violence. Participate in local or statewide efforts to improve health care organizations to eliminate violence.

Domestic Violence and Health Care: Policies and Prevention

Policy.

Promote, facilitate, and motivate coalition against domestic violence. Become a board member or fundraise for a local domestic violence organization. Join a multidisciplinary team or a coordinated community response. Chair the board on other issues and domestic violence. Help encourage health care professionals and the public to work with domestic violence specialists to establish an order.

The Heal T-Colonialism.

Real ways health care providers can participate in systemic change.

WOMEN'S HERITAGE, health care providers can participate in systemic change.

Empower women to take control of their health care decisions and challenge societal beliefs.

Health care providers have an obvious stake in joining the community.