

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Response to Elder Abuse: A Self-Assessment
Workbook for **Law Enforcement**



Response to Elder Abuse: A Self-Assessment Workbook for Law Enforcement



Created in November 2010 by Jane M. Sadusky
Revised June 2011; Updated November 2022

National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)

A Project of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin
1400 E. Washington Ave., Suite 227, Madison, Wisconsin 53703
Phone: 608-255-0539 • www.ncall.us • ncall@ncall.us

Response to Elder Abuse: Self-Assessment Tools for Interveners and Coordinated Community Response Teams

Introduction and Process

This project was supported by Grant No. 2005-EW-AX-K003 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

The National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL) has designed this set of self-assessment tools to assist communities in evaluating practices within and across key intervening agencies and in building a coordinated response to elder abuse. The tools include a series of workbooks for five key interveners—(1) domestic violence and sexual assault victim services, (2) adult protective services, (3) law enforcement, (4) prosecution, and (5) courts—and one that addresses coordinated community response (CCR).

*The tools provide a way of
checking what we think we
do against what we really do.*
— Aging services program

The tools were developed in collaboration with practitioners from across the country. They draw on state-of-the-art knowledge and promising practice recommendations for recognizing forms of elder abuse; building a victim-centered response that maximizes victim safety and autonomy; assessment and investigation strategies; safety planning; understanding the impact of violence, abuse, and trauma; holding perpetrators of elder abuse accountable for their actions; respecting and meeting the needs of older persons from diverse cultures, identities, and backgrounds; and building a coordinated community response to address elder abuse and its victims. Several grantees funded by the Office on Violence Against Women tested the tools in their own communities and their experiences informed the process outlined in this introduction.

How is elder abuse defined?

As used throughout the self-assessment tools, “elder abuse” is abuse, neglect, or exploitation—including domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault—against an older adult by anyone with whom the victim has or has had an ongoing relationship where there is an expectation of trust. Self-neglect is not included in this definition.

This is not a legal definition; statutorily, there is wide variety in how elder abuse is defined from state to state and in criminal, protective, and civil law within a state. While elders can be victimized by strangers, the majority of abuse experienced by older adults is perpetrated by non-strangers: i.e., intimate partners, adult children, other family members, fiduciaries, and caregivers. Abuse occurs in facilities as well as community settings.

Domestic abuse in later life is a subset of elder abuse. It may include physical abuse, threats, sexual violence and an array of other behaviors and tactics. Sexual abuse in later life is non-consensual sexual contact of any kind with an older person. At the conclusion of the tools is **Appendix 3**, which contains a graphic representation of abuse in later life (**Figure 2**). Various sections of the self-assessment tools will refer back to the tactics on the wheel.

What is the purpose of the self-assessment tools?

The goal of the self-assessment/CCR assessment tools is to encourage intervening agencies and CCRs to candidly and thoughtfully assess their work and the processes they use. The tools are intended to examine and expand collective thinking and response to elder abuse. They help identify existing practices and introduce new approaches in order to strengthen the overall response. They are meant to facilitate and encourage discussion and raise questions about roles, response, coordination, and common purpose. The tools are to assist communities in evaluating their work. They are not a replacement for doing the work.

Not every element included in the self-assessment/CCR assessment tools will be in place in every community, nor is there an expectation that every element will be or can be implemented in every community. Many organizations and communities are relatively new to paying focused attention to elder abuse, while others are members of a longstanding coordinated community response. Not

every item included in the tools will or should work in the same way everywhere. Communities must account for local conditions and what works in Chicago may not work in rural Wyoming.

Each self-assessment includes a process for designing a plan for change. The Action Plan helps identify future actions, projects, and steps; identifies who will undertake what actions; and provides a timeline to track progress. Organizations and CCR teams completing a self-assessment are encouraged to approach the plan as a living document that they return to and refresh in a process of ongoing reflection, planning, action, and reassessment.

When should the tools be used and in what order?

The tools can be used at different points in building and maintaining a coordinated community response or in ongoing attention to specific practices. For example:

We decided to work through a couple of sections at a time, then discuss and develop a plan in response to those issues...and where we want to head collaboratively.
– Prosecutor's office

- **Conducting a review of a specific agency or organization**
Use the self-assessment workbook to look closely at a particular point of intervention, such as victim services or law enforcement. Whether or not other disciplines or prospective CCR partners are ready to move forward and examine their practices, those that are can use the self-assessment tools to do so.
- **Forming a new CCR**
Use the discipline-specific workbooks as part of the needs assessment process to help identify gaps in practice and areas that individual partners and the larger CCR will address. Use the CCR tool to identify the key tasks and steps to take in establishing the coordinated community response.
- **Conducting a “check-up” of an established CCR**
Use the tools to gauge whether intended changes in policy and practice have been made, both within partner agencies and across the CCR.
- **Identifying what is needed to accomplish the goals of the CCR**
Use the ideas in the External Activities and Functions section of the CCR

tool to identify next steps or activities or missing disciplines and prospective partners.

Local conditions vary and in some communities the CCR assessment may be the primary focus of attention. In others, the tools for individual disciplines may be used first. Still others may use all of the tools simultaneously. Some communities may not yet have the relationships in place that make it possible to use all of the discipline-specific tools or to widely share the results or begin the process of creating a CCR.

Using the self-assessment tools is **voluntary** for any agency or community, including Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) Abuse in Later Life grantees. The tools are provided as a resource to assist in planning, evaluating, and strengthening the response to elder abuse and in carrying out required activities. The OVW Abuse in Later Life program requires that each community conduct a victim needs assessment, engage in systems review, and develop a coordinated community response to address elder abuse. These tools were developed to assist communities in accomplishing these tasks. Past grantee communities have requested such tools, citing a lack of time, expertise, or ability to create them themselves. A community does not have to use this specific self-assessment process and can design its own approach and materials.

Who should be involved in completing the self-assessment?

The tools are not intended to be completed by one or two individuals working in isolation.

The self-assessment process works best when completed using a team that involves the agency or organization's leaders, staff, and board members (with the discipline-specific tools) or all of the key partners in the coordinated community response. The tools are built on a process of reflection and discussion that requires candid and thoughtful conversation among those with different experiences within the organization or community.

How long will it take to complete the tool(s)?

Generally, allow time to complete the self-assessment and all of its sections over a series of meetings. While there is no required or specified time frame for either the discipline-specific tools or the CCR tool, it will be most helpful to proceed

steadily following a regular schedule, without long delays between completing the sections, discussing the results, and implementing the Action Plan.

The time required to complete the tools will vary according to local conditions and the scope of the self-assessment. Such variables can include: the number of participating agencies and organizations; whether all critical disciplines are fully engaged in the self-assessment; the process that each system will use to complete its own tool; whether the grant partners or CCR will review each tool after the individual disciplines have completed their analysis; the CCR's level of development and experience (e.g., a highly developed and evolved CCR is likely to move through the tool more quickly than a community that is new to CCR work); and, whether the CCR is devoted exclusively to elder abuse or is part of a broader domestic- or family-violence-oriented CCR.

Is there a recommended process for using the tools?

The broad steps are similar, whether using one or more of the discipline-specific workbooks or the CCR tool. At the same time, each kind of self-assessment tool has its own features and process. **Figure 1**, in **Appendix 3** at the end of this tool, provides a snapshot of the key steps and considerations in applying the process in each setting.

Participants in the pilot test communities adapted and used the tools in the following ways: transferred the content to a Web-based survey tool; worked through sections common across disciplines first (e.g., safety planning, access, and community collaboration), then discussed the results and developed a plan for further action; completed the tools individually as CCR partners and then reported results at the CCR planning retreat; and completed the tools over a series of agency-wide staff meetings.

Please see **Appendix 1** for a glossary of common terms used in the self-assessment tools and specific to coordinated community response. To learn more about elder abuse or coordinated community response, see **Appendix 2** for a list of resources.

Using the workbook

To begin, become familiar with the content and this introduction and its instructions.

Along with a way of examining current practices, the self-assessment tool is also designed to produce a plan for change and introduce information that helps expand law enforcement's knowledge of and response to elder abuse.

Many disciplines use a self-assessment type of process to examine their missions, roles, and practices. Common approaches include checklists and "best practice" kinds of documents and scales against which a discipline can evaluate its response. Law enforcement agencies completing an accreditation process, such as that sponsored by CALEA, conduct an extensive self-evaluation that includes review of all policies and procedures and the agency's relationship with the community.¹ Various self-assessment tools have been developed for courts by the National Center for State Courts and the National Association for Court Management.² The American Prosecutor's Research Institute has had a project underway to define goals, objectives, and performance measures for prosecutors that will "serve as a valuable tool for self-assessment and improving practices."³

The self-assessment tool can be printed and completed as a workbook, opened and completed in an electronic format, or adapted for online surveys. Whatever the approach, keep a record of your work and action plan in a format that can be readily retrieved, reviewed, updated and shared.

Questions and feedback

If you have questions or want to provide NCALL staff with feedback about your experience using the tools, please call (608) 616-4068 or email ncall@ncall.us.

¹ Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), <https://www.calea.org/>

² National Center for State Courts, <https://www.ncsc.org/>; National Association for Court Management, <https://nacmnet.org/>

³ Steve Dillingham, M. Elaine Nugent, and Debra Whitcomb, *Prosecution in the 21st Century: Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures*, APRI, February 2004.

Section 1: Assessment Grid

Date:	Assessment grid completed by:
--------------	--------------------------------------

Instructions: For the seven dimensions included in the assessment, review each element and check whether or how often it applies, using the scale (always...need more information). In the notes section, record any comments that pertain to that dimension, such as specific accomplishments, barriers, or ideas for change.⁴

1: Investigation		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
1A	Framework				
1A-1	We provide officers with equipment and technology that support a timely and thorough investigation; e.g., digital cameras, cell phones, audio and video recording equipment, laptops, and databases.				
1A-2	When a person's situation does not meet criteria for the arrest of a suspect, we provide the victim with information on legal rights (e.g., right to make a citizen's or private person's arrest) and/or referral to an appropriate agency.				
1A-3	Our officers are alert to the co-occurrence of multiple types of abuse; if they suspect one form of abuse they investigate for other forms.				
1B	Process and components				
1B-1	We interview each reported victim and perpetrator separately.				
1B-2	Our officers are alert to the possibility of elder abuse in many settings, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responding to a specific report of elder abuse Conducting a welfare check Investigating another crime Responding to an adult protective services (APS) referral or request for assistance 				
1B-3	Our officers are prepared to recognize and respond to a victim's functional limitations and the impact of those limitations on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accuracy and credibility of the victim's account Communication Mobility and physical access to the prosecutor's office and courtroom Victim stamina over the course of case processing 				
1B-4	A referral to social services is <u>not</u> the only response in neglect cases. Our officers investigate and collect evidence as if crimes have been committed.				
1B-5	Our officers have a pocket card, booklet, or checklist that includes types of abuse, key statutes and elements of selected crimes, and an elder abuse response protocol.				

⁴ This self-assessment tool draws on elder abuse training for law enforcement, the Enhanced Training and Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women in Later Life Program, provided to 2007-2009 Office on Violence Against Women grantees by the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL) and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC).

1: Investigation		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
1B-6	When authorized by law, we allow an advocate to be present during interviews if requested by the victim.				
1B-7	Our officers use the Abuse in Later Life Power and Control Wheel to aid their investigations: e.g., in interviews with victims and suspects about potential forms of abuse; or as a cue to ways in which an abuser might attempt to manipulate officers.				
1B-8	We are prepared to investigate and distinguish injuries caused by criminal actions from those caused by non-criminal actions.				
1B-9	Our officers investigate for possible strangulation in elder abuse cases.				
1B-10	Our officers investigate unattended death of an older adult as a homicide, until the medical examiner/coroner establishes otherwise.				
1B-11	We are alert to the following <u>justifications that blame the victim</u> of elder abuse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accident ("she's clumsy") Caregiver stress ("he's too hard to care for") Victim's behavior ("she didn't stay where I told her to...she overreacted...he gave it to me...she consented...she's confused...he's forgetful") Mutual abuse or self-defense ("she started it") 				
1B-12	We are alert to the following <u>justifications that excuse the perpetrator</u> of elder abuse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anger problem ("I have a bad temper, short fuse") Substance abuse ("I was drunk or high") Physical or mental health ("I have Alzheimer's") Learned behavior ("I was abused as a child by my parent") Culture ("in my culture elders support their adult children") Normal caregiver activity ("I was just washing him") 				
1B-13	We are alert to forms of elder sexual abuse, including hands-on offenses, hands-off offenses, and harmful genital practices. ⁵				
1B-14	We are alert to forms of stalking in later life.				
1B-15	Our officers are prepared to recognize and investigate methods of financial exploitation,				
1B-16	Our officers are prepared to investigate reports of elder abuse in a facility setting in which an individual victimizes residents (e.g., a sexual predator living or working in the facility or an abusive family member).				
1B-17	Our officers are prepared to investigate reports of elder abuse in a facility setting in which management and operation of the facility led to abuse of residents.				
1B-18	Our officers are prepared to distinguish health remedies used by different cultures, such as cupping or coining, which can look like signs of physical abuse.				
1B-19	When an arrest is not made our officers submit an incident report documenting what occurred, the status of the parties, and the reason for the non-arrest decision.				
Notes: Accomplishments? Barriers? Ideas for change? [Expand or add pages as needed]					

⁵ For example, hands-on offenses include kissing and touching of breasts or buttocks; hands-off offenses include exhibitionism and forced viewing of pornography; harmful genital practices include unwarranted or intrusive procedures in caring for genital or rectal area. These categories reflect the research and analysis of Holly Ramsey-Klawnsnik. An interview and links can be found at https://www.preventelderabuse.org/elderabuse/s_abuse.html

2: Safety Planning		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
2A	Framework				
2A-1	Our investigators rely on <u>multiple</u> sources of information and tools in a team or interdisciplinary setting in making decisions about danger and safety.				
2A-2	Our investigation process identifies and accounts for the dynamics of domestic violence, including distinctions between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abuse by a spouse or partner Abuse by other family members 				
2A-3	We recognize and reinforce that leaving or otherwise ending the relationship with a perpetrator of elder abuse is a complex decision for a victim that does not necessarily guarantee safety.				
2A-4	Victim safety is a priority over any inquiry into or reporting of immigration status.				
2B	Process and components				
2B-1	On-scene and emergency safety planning explores and accounts for tactics of ongoing abuse. ⁶				
2B-2	In talking with victims, we use common language and avoid professional or technical jargon and terms.				
2B-3	When an arrest has not been made, our officers explain to the victim why and what will happen next.				
2B-4	At the conclusion of the initial call or investigation, our officers provide a victim with information about specific community services that can provide help and support, such as aging network services and domestic violence or sexual assault programs.				
2B-5	At the conclusion of the initial call or investigation, our officers encourage the victim to call 911 if she/he is abused again or feels threatened or fearful.				
2B-6	If requested by the victim, at the conclusion of the initial call or investigation our officers contact an advocate to assist with ongoing and long-term safety planning.				
2B-7	If applicable under mandatory reporting laws, our officers contact adult protective services (APS).				
2B-8	Our officers initiate emergency protection orders (if authorized by law) or make referrals to advocacy services that can assist with protection orders.				
2B-9	If authorized by law, we remove firearms from perpetrators of elder abuse.				
2B-10	We respond to and enforce violations of protection orders in elder abuse cases.				
Notes: Accomplishments? Barriers? Ideas for change? [Expand or add pages as needed]					

⁶ What kinds of tactics of abuse have been used? How will the victim be kept safe? What will make it possible for the victim to remain safely in a location of her or his choosing? How can contact with the perpetrator be restricted or permitted only under specific situations with another party present? What arrangements will be made for someone to help or stay with the victim once responding or investigating officers leave?

Note: This dimension addresses access in two forms: (1) disability-related access and (2) cultural accessibility.

3: Access		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
3A	Framework				
3A-1	We invite diverse groups of people with disabilities and elders to conduct an accessibility assessment, including a tour of facilities and review of interview and intervention practices. ⁷				
3A-2	We invite representatives from culturally distinct communities to review our interview and intervention practices. ⁸				
3A-3	We assign designated staff to know and maintain ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards for accessibility.				
3A-4	Our agency reflects the diversity of our service area.				
3A-5	We conduct an agency-wide assessment of our disability accessibility policies and practices on a regular basis (i.e., every one to five years). ⁹				
3A-6	We conduct an agency-wide assessment of our cultural accessibility policies and practices on a regular basis (i.e., every one to five years). ¹⁰				
3B	Process and components				
3B-1	We collaborate with specialists working with people with disabilities, including blind/low vision, Deaf/hard of hearing, physical disabilities, diminished cognition, psychiatric, and others, when the situation requires additional skills and knowledge.				
3B-2	We have a protocol to guide officers in determining a <u>victim's</u> specific disability accommodation needs.				
3B-3	We have a protocol to guide officers in determining a <u>suspect's</u> specific disability accommodations needs.				
3B-4	We provide appropriate interpreter services or communication assistance to those involved in a case of reported abuse who have sensory or speaking impairments or limited English proficiency. ¹¹				
3B-5	We have the training, technology, equipment, or links with community agencies necessary to provide access to our agency for persons with the following kinds of needs: <input type="checkbox"/> mobility <input type="checkbox"/> vision <input type="checkbox"/> hearing <input type="checkbox"/> speech <input type="checkbox"/> cognition				
3B-6	In our interviews and other interactions we are attentive to and respectful of generational and cultural customs and courtesies.				

⁷ We recognize that there will be varying levels of confidentiality concerns that must be addressed, but we don't automatically assume that such community-based assessment is unworkable.

⁸ See Sujata Warrior, *Culture Handbook*, published by the Family Violence Prevention Fund, June 2005; available at <http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/ImmigrantWomen/Culture%20Handbook.pdf>.

⁹ The U. S. Department of Justice has developed materials to assist law enforcement agencies in meeting Americans with Disabilities Act requirements: <https://www.ada.gov/resources/disability-rights-guide/>

¹⁰ For example, the National Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University has self-assessment tools and processes available at <https://nccc.georgetown.edu/assessments/>.

¹¹ Appropriate assistance includes such measures as using professional interpreters or APS staff fluent in the person's language; safeguarding confidentiality when using non-APS assistance; ensuring that the assistant has no stake or conflict of interest in the case; and, avoiding family members unless requested by the person (and without involvement in the case); providing aids and materials at no cost.

3: Access		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
3B-7	<p>Our response accounts for ways in which aspects of an elder's culture or identity might influence her or his decision-making and response, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mistrusting information provided by law enforcement, health care, or social services because of historic discrimination • Seeing information provided by law enforcement, health care, or social services as contrary to religious beliefs • Deferring to other relatives or adult children when family decision-making is the norm • Misunderstanding because of limited English proficiency¹² 				
<p>Notes: Accomplishments? Barriers? Ideas for change? [Expand or add pages as needed]</p>					

¹² These recommendations reflect the work of Dr. Georgia J. Anetzberger in adult protective services investigation and assessment training prepared for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

4: Outreach & Services		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
4A	Framework				
4A-1	Attention to elder abuse is integrated into our patrol response.				
4A-2	Attention to elder abuse is integrated into our community and neighborhood-orientated policing assignments.				
4A-3	We allow adequate time to work with older victims and recognize that they may need more time to express themselves and consider their choices.				
4A-4	Our community education and outreach materials reflect the diversity of older victims of abuse, including but not limited to aspects of race, ethnicity, faith and spirituality, language, literacy, sexual orientation, geography (urban and rural), ability, and tribal standing, as reflects our service area.				
4B	Components				
4B-1	We use a variety of methods to inform the community and build awareness of elder abuse, such as brochures, public service announcements, and presentations to health care professionals, financial institutions, and others who have regular contact with older persons.				
4B-2	We provide information about how to report elder abuse at a wide range of locations in the community, from social service agencies and health care facilities to banks and senior centers.				
4B-3	Our officers carry a pocket card, checklist, booklet, or similar item that identifies key community resources for legal assistance, advocacy, and other support for victims of elder abuse.				
4B-4	We have links to elder housing options and alternatives, both emergency and long-term.				
4B-5	We connect victims with assistance in filing a crime victim's compensation claim.				
4C	Referrals				
4C-1	Our agency routinely receives referrals for older persons from APS, aging program staff, mental health workers, domestic abuse and sexual assault agencies, health care providers, and clergy.				
4C-2	Our agency routinely receives referrals from agencies organized in and working with culturally distinct and diverse communities.				
4C-3	We routinely make referrals to other governmental agencies and community-based organizations that can support the person's overall, long-term safety and well-being. For example, we make referrals to legal advocacy, emergency and other housing assistance, and victim support groups.				
Notes: Accomplishments? Barriers? Ideas for change? [Expand or add pages as needed]					

5: Policy & Procedure		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
5A	Framework				
5A-1	Our policies and procedures define elder abuse.				
5A-2	Our policies and procedures identify domestic abuse in later life as a common form of elder abuse.				
5A-3	We conduct a regular review (i.e., every one to five years) of all agency policies, procedures, and practices to determine their impact on victims of elder abuse, including victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in later life.				
5B	Content We have policies and procedures in place to address:				
5B-1	<u>Arresting a suspect</u> with a disability, frailty, or specialized medical need				
5B-2	<u>Booking and jailing a suspect</u> with a disability, frailty, or specialized medical need				
5B-3	Applying dominant aggressor considerations in elder abuse investigations				
5B-4	Responding to reported elder abuse involving high profile offenders, including law enforcement officers				
5B-5	Responding when the suspect is the victim's caregiver				
5B-6	Securing emergency housing for a victim of elder abuse				
5B-7	Stopping a perpetrator's control and use of a victim's assets				
5B-8	Responding to reported elder abuse in long term care facilities				
5B-9	Working with adult protective services				
5B-10	Working with domestic violence victim advocacy services and making referrals when a case involves domestic abuse in later life				
5B-11	Working with sexual assault victim advocacy services and making referrals when a case involves sexual assault in later life				
5B-12	Circumstances under which a victim advocate can be present during interviews and other interactions between law enforcement and a victim of elder abuse				
5B-13	Unless mandated by law, our policies and procedures prohibit officers from requiring that victims of elder abuse 'press charges' or cooperate with prosecution as a condition of law enforcement action.				
5B-14	Our policy requires that officers disarm perpetrators of elder abuse, when authorized by law.				
5B-15	Our policy prohibits reporting undocumented victims of elder abuse to federal immigration authorities.				
Notes: Accomplishments? Barriers? Ideas for change? [Expand or add pages as needed]					

6: Training		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
6A	Framework				
6A-1	We provide training on elder abuse to responding officers, investigators, supervisors, victim support specialists, and agency volunteers.				
6A-2	We have established, and routinely update, a library of resource materials and professional literature on elder abuse and law enforcement response.				
6A-3	Our training related to elder abuse addresses attitudes, biases, and myths about aging and the resulting barriers to effective response.				
6A-4	We provide training and opportunities to practice how to recognize types of abuse and establish the degree of danger involved.				
6B	Content				
	Our officers receive specific training about:				
6B-1	Recognizing the multiple ways that perpetrators of elder abuse try to manipulate and deceive law enforcement and other interveners				
6B-2	Common justifications that abusers present, including caregiver stress, and the importance of keeping their focus on determining whether a crime has been committed				
6B-3	Recognizing and understanding the complex circumstances that victims face in making decisions about whether to leave an abuser or return to live with an abuser				
6B-4	Interview approaches and techniques for elder abuse cases				
6B-5	How to correctly document a person's functional capacity to understand risk, make decisions, and give informed consent to investigation and services				
6B-6	Victim indicators of possible abuse , including physical signs or behavior cues, such as bruises, inconsistent explanation of circumstances, or reports of money missing				
6B-7	Suspect indicators of possible abuse , including physical signs or behavior cues, such as wounds from victim's self-defense or unwillingness to let officers interview the victim alone				
6B-8	Environmental indicators of possible abuse , including surroundings and condition of the home, such as strong odors of urine and/or feces, lack of assistive devices, locks outside of doors				
6B-9	Observing and documenting the scene in ways that take the implications of <i>Crawford v. Washington</i> into account ¹³				
6B-10	Recognizing and investigating forms of elder sexual abuse				
6B-11	Recognizing and investigating forms of domestic violence in later life				
6B-12	Applying dominant aggressor considerations to elder abuse cases				
6B-13	Recognizing and investigating unique aspects of elder physical abuse, including over-medicating, force feeding, restraining, smothering, and bruising				
6B-14	Financial exploitation as a form of elder abuse				
6B-15	Investigating elder abuse in care facility settings, whether by and against individuals or through management and operational practices				

¹³ *Crawford v. Washington* (2004) changed the standard for determining when hearsay statements are admissible in criminal cases and introduced new challenges in pursuing "evidence-based" prosecution. Articles and links addressing the impact of *Crawford* in domestic violence cases are available from the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence: http://www.ncdsv.org/publications_crawfordvwashington.html.

6: Training		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
6B-16	Application and limitations of elder abuse and domestic violence risk assessment tools				
6B-17	Preparing for and testifying about elder abuse cases in court				
6B-18	Maximizing safety for undocumented immigrant victims of elder abuse				
6B-19	911 call-takers and dispatchers receive training on the dynamics of elder abuse and related communication and response strategies.				
6B-20	Jail officers receive training on considerations in booking and release of elder abuse perpetrators of all ages.				
6B-21	We provide an annual update and review of the widest range of state and federal laws that support investigation, arrest, and prosecution of elder abuse cases.				
6C	Methods				
6C-1	An interdisciplinary team representing law enforcement, prosecution, domestic violence and sexual assault services, and APS or aging network specialists delivers training on elder abuse response and investigation.				
6C-2	We utilize a variety of approaches in providing and supporting training on elder abuse and law enforcement response, including basic officer and field training, roll call or shift change, and web-based or other distance learning.				
6C-3	We use hands-on methods such as scenarios and role plays to practice investigation and response to elder abuse.				
6D	Community connections				
6D-1	We participate in and provide cross-training with prosecution, the aging services network, senior organizations, and domestic abuse and sexual assault services agencies.				
6D-2	We provide training on elder abuse and the law enforcement response to a variety of people who may come in contact with older victims in the course of their work, such as home health care providers and meal volunteers, beauticians, and bank tellers.				
Notes: Accomplishments? Barriers? Ideas for change? [Expand or add pages as needed]					

7: Community Collaboration		This applies...			
		Always/Yes	Sometimes	Never/No	Need more information
7A	Framework				
7A-1	We are active participants in any elder abuse multidisciplinary team (M-team), interdisciplinary team (I-Team), or case consulting team operating in the community.				
7A-2	We routinely use a variety of methods to build links with and expand our understanding of who lives in our community and who should be involved in the wider response to elder abuse.				
7B	Relationships				
7B-1	Our relationships with APS, domestic abuse and sexual assault service agencies, the aging services network, and senior organizations are characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong linkages Frequent communication Cross-training and other joint events or projects 				
7B-2	We have links with and a referral process in place to connect elders with other community services, whether or not an arrest has been made.				
7C	Systems change				
7C-1	We are linked with and participate in state efforts focused on elder abuse and abuse in later life, including the work of law enforcement associations, state domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions, and state coalitions on aging.				
7C-2	We are linked with and participate in national efforts focused on elder abuse and abuse in later life, such as the work of NCALL (National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life), NCEA (National Center on Elder Abuse), FLETC (Federal Law Enforcement Training Center), and the National Sheriff's Association. ¹⁴				
7C-3	We participate in any fatality review team for elder abuse cases, including cases involving older adults and domestic violence.				
Notes: Accomplishments? Barriers? Ideas for change?					

¹⁴ The National Sheriff's Association (NSA) is active in Triad, created in 1988 as a partnership between NSA, the American Association of Retired Persons, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. The purpose of Triad is "to promote senior safety and to reduce the unwarranted fear of crime that seniors often experience." It has an interest in elder abuse prevention. <https://www.sheriffs.org/programs/triad-programs>

Section 2: Recognize strengths and accomplishments

1. Review each area of the assessment grid and note where you checked “always” and “sometimes.”
2. Use the following template to summarize your strengths and accomplishments. Expand and add pages as needed.

Our Response to Elder Abuse...	
Dimension	Strengths and accomplishments
1) Investigation	
2) Safety planning	
3) Access	
4) Outreach and services	
5) Policy and procedure	
6) Training	
7) Community collaboration	

Section 3: Design an action plan

1. Identify what needs to change in your response to elder abuse.
 - a. Review each area of the assessment grid and note where you checked “sometimes” and “never.”
 - b. Identify what is missing in your response and where you need more information.
2. Set priorities and next steps for the changes you would like to make. Keep in mind:
 - a. New or revised policies and/or procedures
 - b. Better connections and communication
 - c. New or expanded training
 - d. Stronger collaborations
 - e. New or revised technology and/or resources
3. Assign tasks and set timelines.
4. Use the following grid to record your plan. Expand and add pages as needed.

Action Plan: Strengthening Our Response to Abuse in Later Life					
Dimension	Our response will be improved by:	We need more information about:	Priorities and next steps:	Assigned to:	Due:
1) Investigation					
2) Safety planning					

Action Plan: Strengthening Our Response to Abuse in Later Life

Dimension	Our response will be improved by:	We need more information about:	Priorities and next steps:	Assigned to:	Due:
3) Access					
4) Outreach & services					
5) Policy & procedure					
6) Training					
7) Community collaboration					

Section 4: Track your progress

1. Review your plan.
2. Note changes that have been accomplished.
3. Note work that remains to be done.
4. Identify obstacles and ideas for overcoming them.
5. Plan next steps.
6. Use the following template to record and track your progress.

Strengthening Our Response to Elder Abuse...Our Progress

Date:

Progress:

Obstacles:

Next steps:

Assigned to:

Date:

Progress:

Obstacles:

Next steps:

Assigned to:

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

Access/Accessibility: the availability of and ability to use help, protection, and services in ways that fit each person's ability, culture, and identity. A CCR and those intervening in elder abuse are necessarily concerned with cultural accessibility, as well as disability-related access.

Accountability: Responsibility for responses and outcomes. In the context of elder abuse and coordinated community response, there are multiple layers of accountability: (1) an individual's accountability to the person he or she has harmed; (2) an agency's accountability to the person who is the focus of its intervention, whether as a victim of elder abuse or as a perpetrator or involved family member; and (3) the CCR partners' accountability to each other for fulfilling the CCR's mission, vision, and plan.

Action plan: The process to accomplish a goal that has been established by the CCR. It typically consists of clearly defining the goal or project, outlining the steps to complete the goal and their order of completion, assuring accountability, and monitoring progress. Progress should be regularly monitored to assure that the work is completed on schedule, that unexpected complications and obstacles are recognized and addressed, and that assignments and responsibilities are clearly identified. The action plan is a kind of strategic plan.

Annual report: In the context of a CCR, a report that describes and highlights the work undertaken by the CCR. Depending on the specific work of the CCR, the annual report may also contain recommendations for improving responses to elder abuse. The report typically identifies projects and key participants and provides budget and funding information. It informs members, stakeholders, partners, policymakers, legislators, funders, community members, and others interested in the CCR's work; creates a public record of efforts and accomplishments; and publicizes the value of the CCR.

Bylaws: The written rules and regulations that govern how the work of the CCR will be conducted. They often include duties of members and officers, terms of office, how meetings will be conducted, and selection of leadership. Some CCRs use formal bylaws; others may use written memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or more informal working agreements.

Confidentiality: The legal right to have information provided by one person (e.g., client or patient) to another (e.g., an advocate, doctor) kept private and undisclosed to others without consent of the person providing the information. Confidential relationships are defined by law and are part of legal and ethical practice in certain fields, such as domestic violence and sexual assault advocacy, mental health, health care, religious practice, and legal advice. Federal and state laws may make certain records confidential. Each grantee must research state and federal laws that affect confidentiality and information sharing. CCR and MDT/IDT member agencies should examine their policies and interagency agreements to assure that limitations on confidentiality are understood and honored.

Coordinated Community Response (CCR): A victim-centered, collaborative effort initiated by advocacy, legal, criminal justice, social service, and other community systems to create a united and coordinated interagency response to elder abuse that enhances safety for victims of elder abuse and holds offenders accountable for their conduct. This intervention model was originally developed by the Duluth, Minnesota, Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) to address domestic violence. A CCR is a "system of networks, agreements, processes and applied principles" designed to make community systems work in a coordinated manner to enhance victim safety.¹⁵ A CCR's core function is to create a coordinated response and enhance cross-system communication and accountability. A CCR holds its members accountable, identifies service gaps, and coordinates efforts to create a seamless response to the needs of victims of elder abuse.

Data collection: The process of gathering information about the prevalence and type of elder abuse in the community, official responses, and the impact of interventions on victims of elder abuse and on those who commit elder abuse. Data collection helps inform the CCR's strategic plan. Sources of data can include counts of reported cases and details about the type, frequency, and severity of elder abuse; case dispositions; community surveys; and focus groups discussions.

Fatality Review Team (FRT), sometimes called a Death Review Team: A multidisciplinary group of professionals who examine elder deaths to (1) identify and address systemic weaknesses or gaps that if addressed effectively could prevent future similar deaths; and/or (2) develop recommendations for

¹⁵ See <https://www.theduluthmodel.org/about-us/coordinated-community-response/>

coordinated education and prevention efforts to reduce incidence of elder abuse. FRTs may also examine individual cases to identify criminal responsibility and collect evidence to be used in a particular prosecution.¹⁶ (See also: MDT/IDT Team.)

MDT/IDT Team: Multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary team. An MDT/IDT is a group of professionals and others representing different disciplines, professions, and fields who unite as a team to address various aspects of elder abuse. Such a team may be based in a health care, protective services, criminal justice, or community settings or programs. Its efforts tend to be focused on case review or service delivery. Unlike a CCR, the team's role is not to coordinate multiple efforts across a community. (See also: Fatality Review Team.)

"Messaging": Clear, concise, and consistent statements of the CCR's mission and goals, particularly to victims of elder abuse and those who commit elder abuse. In a CCR, the primary messages to victims are ones of protection and safety; to perpetrators, messages of accountability and help.

Mission statement: A brief, formal statement that defines the overarching purpose and priorities of the CCR. The mission statement is the CCR's statement of its core values, in a form that can be easily presented to CCR partners, intervening practitioners, funders, and the public. (See also: vision statement; strategic plan.)

Needs assessment: A systematic process of collecting and examining information about a specific issue (e.g., elder abuse) and its impact on the community in order to (1) determine what people are lacking and set priorities, (2) develop a strategic plan, and (3) allocate resources in response to peoples' identified needs.

Safety: The protection of victims of elder abuse from continued physical, sexual, emotional, and financial harm, coercion, and threats.

Strategic plan: The road map to fulfilling the CCR's mission and vision. A strategic plan sets short- and long-range goals, identifies the actions needed to meet the

¹⁶ See the *Elder Abuse Fatality Review Team Replication Manual*, published by the American Bar Association, Commission on Law and Aging; available at: https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/law_aging/fatalitymanual.authcheckdam.pdf

goals, and assigns responsibility for meeting the goals. The CCR Action Plan included in the self-assessment is a kind of strategic plan. (See also: mission statement; vision statement.)

Sustainability: the ability to endure or continue. In the context of a CCR, “sustainability” refers to developing a purpose, procedures, funding, and other elements that will allow the CCR’s work to continue indefinitely and meet evolving and changing needs and challenges.

“Systems review”: A review to determine if community systems are meeting the needs of elders, including attention to (1) the role each system plays; (2) how participating systems relate, communicate, and coordinate with one another; (3) gaps in services and service delivery and solutions to address the gaps; and (4) training needs to improve coordination and service delivery. A systems review is typically conducted by a formal team or an informal group of professionals from a variety of systems that provide services for victims of elder abuse and/or perpetrators.¹⁷

Vision statement: An articulation of where the CCR seeks to go and to what it aspires. The vision statement provides inspiration and directs the CCR partners in how to accomplish its ongoing work. (See also: mission statement; strategic plan.)

¹⁷ See: Bonnie Brandl, et al., *Elder Abuse Detection and Intervention: A Collaborative Approach*

Appendix 2: Resources

The following organizations provide a variety of resources, training, and technical assistance related to preventing elder abuse and improving intervention and community response.

- ☐ **National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life:** <https://www.ncall.us>
NCALL provides technical assistance, training, and program and policy development to address the nexus between domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, and elder abuse and neglect. NCALL will sponsor sessions to discuss the self-assessment tools and their use at orientation and other stages of the grant process and implementation.
- ☐ **National Center on Elder Abuse:** <https://ncea.acl.gov>
NCEA is a national resource center dedicated to the prevention of elder mistreatment. It has an online library and links to other publications on elder abuse and related issues.
- ☐ **National Adult Protective Services Association:** <https://www.napsa-now.org>
NAPSA provides training, resources, and support to APS administrators and staff throughout the country. It conducts an annual national conference on issues related to elder abuse.
- ☐ **National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges and the National Judicial Institute on Domestic Violence:** <https://www.ncjfcj.org>
The Council provides training, research, and technical assistance to judges and their staff, including Enhancing Judicial Skills in Elder Abuse Cases.
- ☐ **National Center for State Courts:** <https://www.ncsc.org>
NCSC serves as the information hub for the state court community by answering questions, maintaining and distributing information, creating original content, and analyzing trends and best practices in the courts.
- ☐ **Battered Women's Justice Project:** <https://www.bwjp.org>
BWJP is a national resource center that provides training and resources on coordinated community response, with a primary focus on domestic violence. The Resource section of the BWJP Website includes materials

that may be of interest to communities developing an elder-abuse-specific CCR.

☐ **Praxis International:** <https://www.praxisinternational.org>







Praxis is a national technical assistance provider to OVW-grantees that has developed materials related to establishing and maintaining a coordinated community response, with a primary focus on domestic violence.

<https://praxisinternational.org/library/coordinated-community-response-ccr/>

Appendix 3:

Figure 1: Self-Assessment Process

The self-assessment process is much the same, whether using the discipline-specific workbooks or the CCR tool. Instructions specific to the different tools are noted under each step, under the corresponding symbol.

Self-Assessment Steps, Roles, & Responsibilities	
 Workbooks	 CCR Tool
(1) Designate a coordinator to guide the process.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Schedule meetings.✓ Provide copies of the tool(s) to the team.✓ Facilitate discussions.✓ Keep the discussions moving and the process on track.✓ Assure that every perspective is respectfully heard and considered.✓ Track conclusions and agreements.✓ Track progress in implementing changes.	
	Use one or more of the 5 discipline-specific self-assessment workbooks.
	Involve all CCR partners.
(2) Convene the team & conduct the self-assessment.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Review the tool(s) and their purpose, content, and process.✓ Determine how the team will work together. For example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the tool together at one or more staff or CCR meetings.• Work in small groups and bring the results to an organization-wide meeting.• Use “real life” cases to examine practices and complete the grids.✓ Complete the assessment.✓ Encourage full participation and candid discussion.	
	Complete Section 1: Assessment Grid.
	Complete the 4 assessment categories.

Self-Assessment Steps, Roles, & Responsibilities



Workbooks



CCR Tool

- Agree on Philosophy & Mission first; complete the remaining segments in any order. Recommended, but not required: complete the policies and procedures section before moving to Internal and External Functions and Activities.
- Document the process and deliberations: e.g., minutes or flip chart.

(3) Design a plan for change.

- ✓ Determine how the team will work together to design the plan. For example:
 - A day-long retreat
 - A series of staff or CCR meetings
 - Regularly scheduled “assessment meetings”
- ✓ Review the findings and information from the completed self-assessment workbooks and/or CCR tool.
- ✓ Identify strengths & accomplishments.
- ✓ Set priorities.
- ✓ Determine next steps.
- ✓ Assign tasks.
- ✓ Encourage conversation and dialogue.
- ✓ Allow time to reach agreement or closure (i.e., “agree to disagree”).



Complete Section 2: Recognize Strengths and Accomplishments.
Complete Section 3: Design an Action Plan.



Complete the Coordinated Community Response Action Plan template.

- Draw on the answers to the assessment categories to develop the action plan.
- Identify any additional activities and functions to include in the plan.

Self-Assessment Steps, Roles, & Responsibilities



Workbooks



CCR Tool

(4) Track progress.

- ✓ Review the action plan at regular, selected intervals.
- ✓ Note accomplishments.
- ✓ Note work to be completed.
- ✓ Identify obstacles & solutions.
- ✓ Plan next steps.
- ✓ Assign tasks.
- ✓ Approach the plan as a “living document.”
- ✓ Engage in a process of ongoing reflection, planning, action, and reassessment.

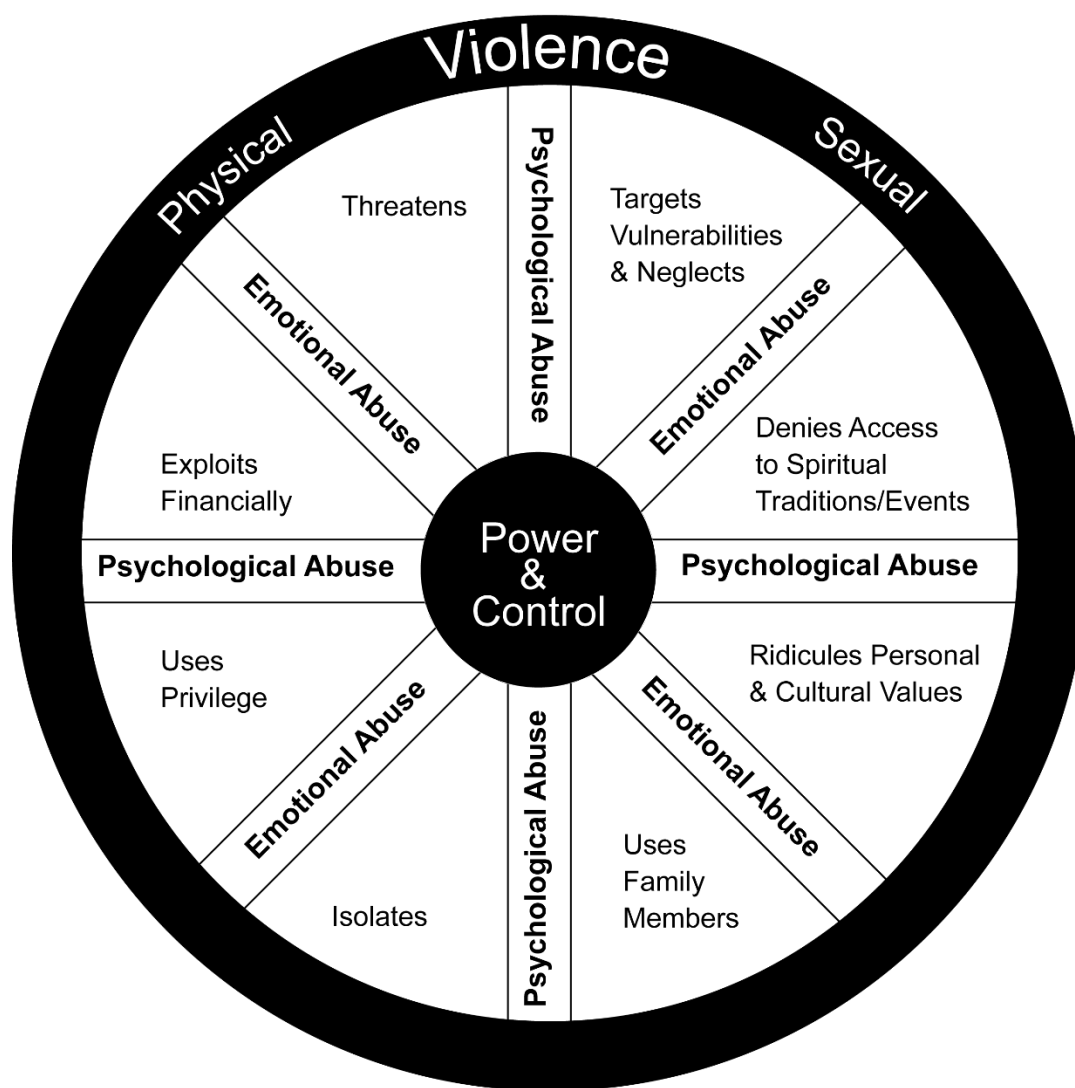


Complete Section 4: Track Your Progress.



Use the check-in sections of the Action Plan.

Figure 2: Abuse in Later Life Wheel



In 2006, NCALL adapted the Power and Control Wheel, developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, MN. Resource updated, April 2011. For a detailed discussion of the Wheel and related information, go to www.ncall.us.