

CCR

Responding to Elder Abuse: A Self-Assessment Tool for **Coordinated Community Response Teams**



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Coordinated Community Response Teams**



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Introduction

The National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL) designed this Coordinated Community Response self-assessment tool to help communities evaluate strengths and areas of improvement for your collective response to elder abuse and abuse in later life. The goal of the self-assessment tool is to encourage CCRs to candidly and thoughtfully assess collaborative efforts across key intervening partners. It will help identify existing inter-agency coordination and processes and introduce new approaches which may strengthen the overall community response. The tool should facilitate and encourage discussion and raise questions about roles, response, coordination, and common purpose. Note: not every element included in the self-assessment tool will be in place in every community, nor is there an expectation that every element will be or can be implemented in every community.

This document contains the following sections:

- Section 1: Self-Assessment Tool
 - The self-assessment addresses five dimensions to consider in evaluating your CCR work focusing on elder abuse.
- Section 2: Action Plan for Change
 - Based on the results of the self-assessment, the Action Plan guides the user through a process to identify future actions, projects, and steps; identifies who will undertake what actions; and provides a timeline to track progress. Inter-agency action plans are an effective way to strengthen current community response to elder abuse and abuse in later life.
- Appendix 1: Resources for Coordinated Community Response Teams

Appendix 2: Abuse in Later Life Power and Control Wheel

- In 2006, NCALL adapted the Power and Control Wheel, developed by Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs in Duluth, MN to create a graphic that represents abuse in later life. Various sections of this tool will refer back to the tactics on the wheel.

How is elder abuse defined?

Elder abuse, according to the Elder Justice Roadmap, “includes physical, sexual or psychological abuse, as well as neglect, abandonment, and financial exploitation of an older person by another person or entity, that occurs in any setting (e.g., home, community, or facility), either in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and/or when an older person is targeted based on age or disability.”

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 older adults can be victimized by strangers, most 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.

How is abuse in later life defined?

Abuse in later life is defined by the Violence Against Women Act as neglect, abandonment, economic abuse, or willful harm of an adult aged 50 or older by an individual in an ongoing relationship of trust with the victim; or domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking of an adult aged 50 or older by any individual; and does not include self-neglect.

What Is a Coordinated Community Response?

As defined for this tool, a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) is agencies working together to create common policies, procedures, and goals while identifying service gaps and holding member agencies accountable with the goal of creating a seamless response to the needs of victims of elder abuse. A CCR is more than a monthly meeting. It is a recognition that no one agency alone can support the complex and holistic needs of older individuals impacted by abuse in later life; it requires multiple organizations working together. To that end, a CCR is continuously at work, building a philosophical framework so that member agencies operate under a common understanding of concepts like victim safety and systemic accountability. A CCR leads the way in developing and implementing policies, including coordinating the sharing of information. A CCR works to ensure that resources that offer safety and protection from further abuse are available. A CCR supports the use of a combination of sanctions, restrictions & rehabilitation services to hold offenders accountable.

A CCR Team (CCRT) is a collection of professionals from various disciplines and professions, governmental entities and community-based organizations, including nonprofits, which share a broad vision of a community's responsibility for enhancing safety for victims of elder abuse. The group is typically comprised of representatives of Adult Protective Services, law enforcement, prosecution, legal assistance programs, probation, courts, domestic violence and sexual assault programs, Long Term Care Ombudsman Programs, aging services organizations, healthcare, mental health, disabilities services, home health, in-home support services, housing, faith community, financial and investment professionals. Depending on the goals and purpose of the CCRT, and specific unique community qualities, other groups may also participate. While the CCRT is balanced between governmental, private, and nonprofit organizations, all members are equal partners. It is recommended that older survivors also serve on the CCRT. If including older survivors proves to be difficult, try conducting focus groups, surveys or informed

interviews with older adults from various backgrounds and lived experiences in order to gain their perspective. Older survivors can tell you what gaps exist or what services are most important to them.

In addition to CCRTs, which focus on community and system-level responses to elder abuse and abuse in later life, some communities have multi-disciplinary groups that focus on individual elder abuse cases. Examples include multidisciplinary teams (MDT) and interdisciplinary teams (IDT), fatality review teams (FRT), and financial abuse specialist teams (FAST). These types of teams may address elements of systems' review, community education, and legislative advocacy, though their primary focus is case review or service delivery. In communities that have both a systems-change team and a case review team, each team's focus can complement the other to ensure older victims experience a coordinated and effective response.

Questions and feedback

If you have questions or want to provide NCALL staff with feedback about your experience using the tools, please email ncall@ncall.us.

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Section 1: Community Coordinated Response (CCR) Assessment Tool

1: Philosophy and Mission	Yes	No
1. Our CCR has a written mission statement or set of principles.		
2. Our CCR has written long-term goals.		
3. Our CCR has a written strategic plan.		
Regarding the <i>Philosophy and Mission</i>, as to questions answered yes:	Yes	No
A. Do these documents respect the confidentiality and safety concerns of victims? Is victim safety a primary focus? <i>If yes, move to next question. If no, reconsider and address. Refer to action plan. (See Section 2).</i>		
B. Did the developmental process include:		
• Participation by victim/survivors?		
• Participation by older individuals?		
• Participation by representatives that reflect the demographics of our community?		
• Balanced disciplines' perspectives, including those of victim advocates?		
• Where applicable, a needs assessment? <i>If yes, move to the next question. If no, review and consider if change is desired. If so, refer to Action plan.</i>		
C. Is each document current, practical, and attainable? <i>If the answer is yes, move to the next section. If the answer is no, review and consider if change is desired. If so, refer to Action plan.</i>		
Regarding the <i>Philosophy and Mission</i>, as to questions answered no:		
A. <i>If the answer is no to questions 1 and 2 above, consider beginning the development process as a key next step. Refer to Action Plan for guidance (Section 2).</i>		
B. <i>If the answer is yes to question 3 above, the CCR may want to review and consider if change is desired. If so, refer to Action Plan.</i>		

2: Policies and Procedures	Yes	No
1. Our CCR has instituted a strong, intentional onboarding process for new members, so they are aware of the purpose, structure and activities of the CCR and their role.		
2. Our CCR member engagement process focuses on relationship-building: developing meaningful partnerships with community-based programs over time, and building trust through actions and integrating learning into practices		
3. Membership includes organizations that address the holistic needs facing older victims. This includes traditional members such as law enforcement, victim services, aging services, adult protective services, and prosecutors. It also includes members addressing the holistic needs of older victims, which may include financial institutions, faith partners, peer support programs, housing programs, mental health services, and others.		
4. Our CCR has written bylaws, policies or procedures that address membership. <i>(This may include who, selection criteria and process, terms in office, recruitment, orientation, level of participation, and removal and replacement.)</i>		
5. Our CCR has written bylaws, policies or procedures that address our expectations from members. <i>(This may include participation in meetings, attendance, activities, and projects, etc.)</i>		
6. Our CCR has written bylaws, policies or procedures that address leadership, including:		
• Executives, including members of the Executive Committee.		
• Staff, whether paid or unpaid.		
• Committee and Project Chairs. <i>(This may include roles, authority, job descriptions, how selected, term of services, removal, and replacement.)</i>		
7. Our CCR has written Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) or Letters of Commitment from member agencies and organizations detailing what each has agreed to do as members of or groups working with our CCR.		
8. Our CCR has written bylaws, policies or procedures that address meeting logistics. <i>(This may include that meetings are regularly scheduled, time, location, duration, who can attend and participate, accessibility of location, and availability of translation and signing services.)</i>		

9. Our CCR has written bylaws, policies or procedures that address record keeping. <i>(This may include the taking and keeping of minutes, correspondence, attendance, voting items and votes taken, financial reports, grant reports, etc.)</i>		
10. Our CCR has written bylaws, policies or procedures that address annual goal setting.		
11. Our CCR has written bylaws, policies or procedures addressing budget considerations. <i>(This may include if, what, and for whom we do fundraising, preparation of financial reports, check signing, spending accountability and oversight.)</i>		
12. Our CCR has written bylaws, policies or procedures that address confidentiality. <i>(This may include confidentiality of what is discussed during meetings, any case or person's data collected or addressed during meetings, and communications with the media).</i>		
13. Our CCR has other bylaws, policies or procedures (please list them below):		
Regarding these <i>Policies and Procedures</i>, as to questions answered yes:	Yes	No
A. Are the bylaws, policies or procedures current, practical, and effective? <i>If yes, move to the next section. If no, review and consider if change desired. If so, refer to Action Plan.</i>		
B. Are the bylaws, policies or procedures being implemented? <i>If yes, move to the next section. If no, review and consider if change desired. If so, refer to Action Plan.</i>		
Regarding these <i>Policies and Procedures</i>, as to questions answered no:		
A. <i>Review and consider if change is desired. If so, refer to Action Plan.</i>		

Note: The first three questions relate to communication within the CCR. These questions relate to core functions that are critical to the CCR's effectiveness and must be addressed.

3: Internal Activities and Functions	Yes	No
1. Our CCR has a regular process to update and inform CCR members of significant/relevant changes within member organizations. <i>(This may include staff turnover, new hires or promotions, assignment changes, changes in the member relationship with the CCR, organizational changes such as from a new mandate or funding requirement, increased or decreased services, progress, and changes. This should be a regular agenda item at every meeting.)</i>		
2. Our CCR has a regular process to address problems that arise in our collaboration that affect victim safety, member agencies, and/or our collaborative efforts.		
3. Our CCR has a regular process to encourage communication and conflict resolution within our collaborative effort.		
Regarding these Internal Activities and Functions, as to questions answered yes:	Yes	No
A. Is this communication timely and effective? <i>If yes, move to the next section. If no, refer to Action Plan.</i>		
B. Do communications respect the confidentiality and safety concerns of victims? <i>If yes, move to the next section. If no, refer to Action Plan.</i>		
Regarding these Internal Activities and Functions, as to questions answered no:		
A. <i>Refer to Action Plan.</i>		

Note: The next set of questions address internal activities and functions a CCR may have selected to undertake based on their mission and goals.

4: Internal Activities and Functions	Yes	No
1. Our CCR uses individual anonymous case examples to examine/map how an older victim experiences services based on the organization they contact.		
2. Our CCR has a process to work through identified gaps in available services.		
3. Our CCR collects data, such as demographics, prevalence data, referrals.		
4. Our CCR creates an annual report that may be used to create community buy-in or summarize the CCR's progress towards goals.		
5. Our CCR conducts internal cross training events, so members understand roles and services of one another.		
6. Our CCR plans for sustainability:		
a. We have 'institutionalized' any improved responses, so it becomes policy or practice.		
b. We periodically evaluate our efforts and re-visit our mission and/or vision statements.		
c. We, as a group, reflect on wisdom gained and share lessons learned.		
Regarding these internal activities and functions, as to questions answered yes:	Yes	No
A. Are these current and effective? <i>If the answer is yes, move to the next section. If the answer is no, consider if change is desired. If so, refer to Action Plan.</i>		
B. Do these respect the confidentiality and safety concerns of victims? <i>If yes, move to the next section. If no, refer to Action Plan.</i>		
Regarding these internal activities and functions, as to questions answered no, does your CCR want to address this issue?		
<i>If yes, refer to Action Plan.</i>		

Note: The next set of questions address external activities and functions a CCR may have selected to undertake based on their mission and goals.

5. External Activities and Functions	Yes	No
A. The work of our CCR includes:		
Community outreach to inform the community, including older adults, professionals, and the general public about available services for older victims.		
Public awareness efforts.		
Prevention programs.		
Legislative advocacy.		
Training and education for community, professionals.		
Working with the media to educate and inform.		
Maintaining and enhancing relationships with policy makers, agency heads, community leaders, and funders.		
Research.		
Connection with other community CCRs.		
Other: (Be specific.)		
Regarding these external activities and functions, as to questions answered yes:	Yes	No
A. Do these activities respect the confidentiality and safety concerns of victims? <i>If yes, move to the next section. If no, refer to Action Plan.</i>		
B. Did the development process include:		
Participation by victim/survivors?		
Participation by older individuals?		

• Participation by members of various backgrounds?		
• Balanced disciplines' perspectives, including those of victim advocates?		
• Where applicable, a needs assessment? <i>If yes, move to the next question. If no, review and consider if change desired. If so, refer to Action Plan.</i>		
C. Is the activity current, practical, and attainable? <i>If yes, you have completed this tool. Congratulations! If no, review and consider if change desired. If so, refer to Action Plan.</i>		
As to questions about external activities and functions answered no, does your CCR want to consider adding any of these activities?		
A. <i>If yes, refer to Action Plan.</i>		

The tool is now completed.

Section 2: Community Coordinated Response (CCR) Action Plan for Change

Now that you have completed the self-assessment tool, you have the foundation for creating a plan for change for any concerns you may have identified during this process. Following is a template to aid in designing this plan for change.

Make additional copies of this table as needed.

Category:
Assigned to:
Check-in: How are we doing?
3 months / Date: _____ • Progress: • Obstacles: • Next steps: • Assigned to:

6 months / Date: _____

- Progress:
- Obstacles:
- Next steps:
- Assigned to:

12 months / Date: _____

- Progress:
- Obstacles:
- Next steps:
- Assigned to:

18 months / Date: _____

- Progress:
- Obstacles:
- Next steps:
- Assigned to:

Category:

What changes are required?

- Who needs to be involved?
- Do we need additional information?
- Preliminary plan and next steps:

Assigned to:
Check-in: How are we doing?
3 months / Date: _____ • Progress: • Obstacles: • Next steps: • Assigned to:
6 months / Date: _____ • Progress: • Obstacles: • Next steps: • Assigned to:

12 months / Date: _____

- Progress:
- Obstacles:
- Next steps:
- Assigned to:

18 months / Date: _____

- Progress:
- Obstacles:
- Next steps:
- Assigned to:

Appendix 1: Resources for Coordinated Community Response (CCR)

The following organizations provide a variety of resources, training, and technical assistance related to preventing abuse in later life and 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. As a coordinated response is an important component to a community's abuse in later life response, NCALL provides training and technical assistance to communities seeking to create or enhance a local coordinated community response.
- **End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin.** 2016. [*Coordinated Community Response \(CCR\) Toolkit*](#).
This toolkit contains a collection of resources for establishing and/or maintaining a CCR Team. Materials include information on both Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. While this toolkit does not focus on older adults, a supplemental toolkit was added in September 2024 to address CCR work focusing on older adults: [*Integrating Abuse in Later Life into your Domestic Violence or Sexual Assault Coordinated Community Response*](#)
- **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. The NCSC also has a Center for Elders and the Courts with a section focusing on [Assessment Resources and Coordination](#).
- **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.

Assessment Tools

- Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy, Violence Against Women with Disabilities Project Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy, (2004). *Self Assessment Tool for Ensuring Access for People with Disabilities*. Retrieved from <http://www.disabilityrightswi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/selfassessmenttool.pdf>.
Tool for sexual assault and domestic violence programs to review their programs and services to ensure equal access and the opportunity to participate for persons with disabilities. Includes sections on effective communication and physical accessibility. Tool has 84 items to assess with suggestions for improvement where deficiencies noted and space to identify how a program will implement improvements.
- Pence, E. and McDonnell, C. (2009). *Developing Policies and Protocols, Coordinated Community Responses to Domestic Violence: Lessons from Duluth and Beyond*, Sage Publications. [Coordinating Community Responses to Domestic Violence: Lessons From Duluth and Beyond | Office of Justice Programs](#)

Describes the goals and philosophy of the Duluth (MN) domestic abuse coordinated community response and how the community evaluates its systemic responses. Provides a framework for understanding how community agencies involved in domestic violence response negotiate agreements and have transformed their system.

Potential Obstacles and Barriers for a CCR

- United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs. (2002). *Privacy of Victims' Counseling Communications*.
https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/pubs/OVC_Archives/bulletins/legalseries/bulletin8/2.html
History of victim counselor privilege laws, types of laws, rationale for the privilege and future directions for victim-counselor privilege.
- Marlatt Otto, J. and Quinn, K. (May 2007), *Barriers to and Promising Practices for Collaboration Between Adult Protective Services and Domestic Violence Programs A Report for the National Center on Elder Abuse*. Retrieved from [Barriers to and Promising Practices for Collaboration Between Adult Protective Services and Domestic Violence Programs \(communitysolutionsva.org\)](https://communitysolutionsva.org)
Describes the historical development of the APS and domestic violence systems, barriers to collaboration between the two systems identified by participants at regional meetings and through a survey and highlights successful collaborative initiatives.
- Teaster, P. B., Stansbury, K. L., Nerenberg, L., & Stanis, P. (2009). An Adult Protective Services' View of Collaboration with Mental Health Services. *Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect*, 21(4), 289-306. Retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20183136/>.
This study examines effective APS-MHS collaborations (e.g., leadership, organizational culture, administration, and resources in predicting success). A survey that was sent to members of the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) revealed that both APS and MHS have strong commitments to protecting clients' rights and autonomy, but there appear to be differences between the two with regard to implementation, apparent in cases involving clients with diminished mental capacity who are at imminent risk, but who refuse

help. Strengths of APS-MHS collaborations included improved communication and better service for at-risk clients.

Sample Forms and Policies

- State of Kentucky, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Elder Abuse Committee (2002). *Model Protocol for Local Coordinating Councils on Elder Maltreatment*. Retrieved from <https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dCBS/dpp/apb/Documents/modelprotocol.pdf>
A comprehensive guide for establishing, maintaining, setting goals and priorities, and evaluating a local elder maltreatment coordinating council. Sections include purpose, critical membership, roles and responsibilities of members, structure, leadership, staffing, processes, strategic planning and goal setting, and evaluating the effort. Sample forms include a model ordinance to create, community needs assessment tools, strategic planning, evaluation survey, guidelines to operate a fatality review team, safety planning, and confidentiality agreements. Local community resources and applicable laws are also included.

Appendix 2: Abuse in Later Life Wheel

In 2006, NCALL adapted the Power and Control Wheel, developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, MN to create this wheel.

