



ELDER ABUSE HURTS, TOO.

The Iowa Elder Abuse Initiative

Iowa Department on Aging

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Southwest 8 Senior Services, Inc.

The Heritage Agency

Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging

Northwest Aging Association

The Elder Abuse Initiative (EAI) focuses on the prevention, intervention, detection and reporting of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation by presenting elders with options to enhance their lifestyle choices.

HOW IT WORKS

The Elder Abuse Initiative (EAI) is a service delivery system created through partnerships with the Area Agencies on Aging, the Department of Human Services (DHS), law enforcement, county attorney's, providers, and other stakeholders in the community. Referrals are received from the community, law enforcement and DHS. When these calls are received, the Regional Prevention Coordinator (RPC) contacts the client and makes an assessment of needs, identifies potential or real risk, provides an evaluation of dependency and coordinates service delivery.

Objectives

- Respond to reported concerns of elders at risk of, or experiencing, abuse, neglect or exploitation;
- Network and coordinate community resources to respond to the needs of the targeted population;
- Collaborate and be a resource for case managers, physicians, law enforcement, county attorneys, DHS, domestic violence agencies and long term care facilities;
- Locally increase public awareness on elder abuse issues; and
- Enhance the quality of mandatory reporter training in local areas.

Result: Vulnerable elders & community stakeholders gain information about available services and support systems, which allow elders to live at home with greater comfort and security.

Warning Signs of Possible Abuse

- Lack of environmental needs or unsafe structures
- Mail / newspaper not collected
- Lack of cleanliness, grooming, personal or medical care
- Significant weight loss, malnutrition, dehydration
- Withdrawal, depression or isolation
- Unexplained injuries or injuries inconsistent with the explanation
- Advancing memory difficulties
- Family relying on elder's finances, unusual spending, new poverty

According to the Journal of National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, Fall 2003 Issue, "84% of elder abuse cases go unreported and 40% of all elder abuse involves some form of financial exploitation."