

# Elder abuse

(March 2023)

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## Rationale

Elder abuse is action or neglect causing harm or distress to an older person where there is an expectation of trust.

## Causal Conditions

(list not exhaustive)

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Financial or material exploitation
- Neglect (e.g., physical, social, emotional)

## Key Objectives

Given an older person in a state of distress or presenting with unexplained findings, the candidate will inquire about potential elder abuse. In particular, the candidate will determine the level of immediate risk, identify potential contributing factors, and outline an appropriate management plan.

## Enabling Objectives

Given a case of possible elder abuse, the candidate will

- list and interpret critical clinical findings, including
  - a. potential signs of abuse (e.g., fear, malnutrition);
  - b. the need to interview the patient alone;

- c. risk factors for abuse, including the patient's support structure and social circumstances; and
  - d. the capacity of the patient to make personal care decisions; and
- construct an effective initial management plan, including
  - a. ensuring the patient is in a safe environment;
  - b. involving other team members or agencies, if indicated (e.g., social worker); and
  - c. providing support and education to the caregiver, if necessary.