

## ADULT SUSPECTED ABUSE / NEGLECT

In cases of suspected adult abuse/neglect, it is imperative to remain calm and professional to prevent the emotional reaction of the patient and others on the scene to become more intense. **Use extreme tact and professionalism. DO NOT let emotions or prejudices interfere with appropriate patient care.**

Abuse is the infliction or threat of physical or psychological harm, including the use of undue influence or the imprisonment of a vulnerable adult or facility resident.

Neglect is the unreasonable failure by a caregiver to provide the care necessary to maintain the safety or health of a vulnerable adult or self-neglect by a vulnerable adult, including the use of undue influence by a caregiver to cause self-neglect.

Self-neglect is the inability of a vulnerable adult to meet his/her own basic needs of daily living due to mental or physical condition.

Financial exploitation is the intentional misappropriation, misuse, or use of undue influence to cause the misuse of funds or assets of a vulnerable adult or facility resident. Financial exploitation does not apply to a transaction or disposition of funds or assets where a person made a good-faith effort to assist the vulnerable adult or facility resident with the management of his or her money or other items of value.

- A. Assure that scene is safe for both rescuers and patient.
- B. Perform **Initial Treatment / Universal Patient Care Protocol** and follow the proper protocol for medical management based on clinical presentation.
- C. Provide appropriate emergency medical treatment for all injuries found (refer to appropriate trauma protocols).
- D. Obtain history from all available sources including child, parent/caregiver, and other witnesses.
- E. Alleged sexual abuse:
  - 1. Discourage patient from going to bathroom.
  - 2. Do not allow patient to change clothes or wash.
  - 3. Give nothing by mouth.
- F. Transport.

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G. Contact **Medical Command**.



H. Upon arrival at the hospital, inform the receiving medical personnel of your findings and/or suspicions. Document the call carefully and thoroughly. Use the telephone to relay pertinent information to **Medical Command**.

**Note:** Current WV law sets forth that as mandated reporters of adult abuse and neglect, any medical, dental or mental health professional are required to report the circumstances of adult abuse/neglect or cause a report to be made to the WV Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR) within 48 hours after suspecting abuse. Additionally, they are required to report the circumstances to the person in charge of the receiving institution or a designated person thereof. That person is then required to make the report or cause a report to be made. While EMS providers may report the circumstances to WVDHHR themselves, they must always make a report to the person in charge of the receiving institution, or a designated person thereof, who then has a statutory duty to report.

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Adult Protective Services  
Mandatory Reporting Form:

[APS Mandatory Reporting Form Rev 08.2017.pdf \(wv.gov\)](#)