



# Abuse and Neglect Reporting

# Abuse & Neglect: Reporting

It is important that everyone who has contact with a patient understand the warning signs of possible abuse and neglect, as well as, the steps necessary to report potential cases.

## Abuse/Sexual Abuse

Physical, sexual or emotional harm or risk of harm to a child under the age of 18 caused by a parent, guardian or other caregiver of the child:

- Unexplained bruises, welts, burns, fractures (sometimes in various stages of healing), lacerations, wariness or fear of parent or caregiver
- Difficulty in walking or sitting, torn, stained or bloody underclothes, genital pain or itching, bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal or anal areas, reluctance to change or participate in physical education
- Withdrawn, fantasy or infantile behavior, bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge, delinquent or runaway

## Neglect

Occurs when a parent or caregiver fails to provide proper supervision for a child or adequate food, clothing, shelter, education or medical care although financially able/assisted to do so:

- Consistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress, unattended physical problems or medical needs, consistent lack of supervision, constant fatigue or listlessness, begging, stealing food

# Abuse & Neglect: Identification and Referral

- All cases of suspected abuse and neglect **must** be immediately reported to the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCPP). DCPP has legal responsibility for investigating and processing cases of suspected child abuse, neglect or abandonment.
- Within the hospital setting, a call is made by or on behalf of the physician or Hospital Administrator to DCPP which provides a 24-hour emergency hotline: **877.652.2873**
- UH social workers are an integral part of the notification process and are available 7-days a week to assist with this process.
- State of NJ Department of Children & Families:  
<http://www.nj.gov/dcf/index.shtml>



# Abuse & Neglect: Domestic Violence

- Control by one partner over another in a dating, marital or live-in relationship
- The means of control include physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse, threats and isolation

## Who is affected by domestic violence?

- Every culture, ethnic and age group
- All socioeconomic, educational and religious backgrounds
- Same sex and heterosexual relationships
- Children (indirectly)

## Information to share with a domestic violence victim:

- If the patient voices a concern regarding domestic violence, encourage them to contact the police and consider filing a restraining order AND
- **Call:**
  - NJ State Domestic Violence Hotline at **1.800.572.7233** (24 hours a day/7 days a week)
  - National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1.800.799.7233** (24 hours a day/7 days a week)  
TTY at **1.800.787.3224**

# Abuse and Neglect: Elder Abuse

Physical, psychological, sexual or financial harm is brought to a vulnerable/elderly adult and/or when the vulnerable/elderly adult's basic needs are not being provided for adequately:

- Financial abuse or exploitation (gross overcharging, scams, family member taking advantage)
- Vulnerable adult self neglect: inability to care for self (bills, laundry, bathing, etc.) due to mental or physical illness, i.e. sufferers of dementia. Often can't seek help due to the lack of awareness to do so.

## Identification and Referral

- Adult Protective Services (APS) programs are established in every NJ county to receive and investigate reports of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable adults living in the community.
- If elder abuse, neglect or financial exploitation is expected, the physician should consult with a UH social worker who will complete an initial evaluation. This should be done prior to discharging the patient from the hospital. If the social worker assessment confirms a potential abuse situation he/she will assist in the safe placement of the patient and notify the local APS agency.
- ***To report a case in your area call:***
  - New Jersey Adult Protective Services at **609.588.6501**
  - For county wise listings, please refer to the Department of Human Services at this link



# Abuse and Neglect: Elder Abuse

Physical, psychological, sexual or financial harm is brought to a vulnerable/elderly adult and/or when the vulnerable/elderly adult's basic needs are not being provided for adequately.

## For Institutional Abuse contact:

- **Office of the Ombudsman for Institutionalized Elderly**
  - Investigates allegations of abuse and neglect of people age 60 and older living in nursing homes and other long term health care facilities
- 24 hour toll free hotline : **877.582.6995**



## Use your “**RADAR**”

**R**outinely screen every patient

**A**sk directly, kindly, nonjudgmentally in a private setting

**D**ocument findings

**A**ssess patient’s safety

**R**eview options and provide referrals

