

ABUSE OR SUSPECTED ABUSE OF CLIENTS

What is abuse? Abuse is the misuse of clients either physically, emotionally, or sexually. Anyone can be the victim of abuse, so please be alert to the signs and symptoms.

Signs and Symptoms of Adult Abuse:

- Witnessed beatings
- Emotional abuse: verbal assaults, threats of violence, or harassment
- Sexual abuse: inappropriate touching, fondling others, sexual acts with an adult when the person is forced, unable to understand, unwilling to consent, or threatened
- Unexplained or questionable bruises, welts, skin discoloration, or fractures
- Unexplained or questionable burns; may be caused by cigarettes, friction from ropes, or contact with other objects
- Signs of unnecessary confinement: victim is tied to the bed, locked in a room
- Financial exploitation: a caregiver or family member that misuses or withholds the adult's resources, resulting in unpaid bills, inadequate clothing, or inadequate personal care items; an adult who is grossly overcharged for residence or services, deception of theft of property or funds

Signs and Symptoms of Adult Neglect:

- Hazardous housing
- Failure to administer prescribed medications or to seek medical care for the adult
- Any situation where there is a failure to provide for the needs of the adults that results in physical harm to that person; i.e., weight loss, sketchy nutrition record, or missed meals

Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse:

- Unexplained or questionable scars, burns, welts, bruises, or fractures
- Unnecessary confinement
- Witnessed beatings
- Sexual abuse (see adult abuse)
- Emotional abuse (see adult abuse)
- Withdrawn, angry, or unusual behavior exhibited by the child

Signs and Symptoms of Child Neglect:

- Malnourishment, failure to thrive and grow
- Lack of medical care
- Filthy or unsafe environment
- Poor hygiene and personal care
- Absence of parents and appropriate supervision
- Irregular school attendance

What do I do if I suspect a patient is being abused? If you suspect abuse, start by reporting it to your supervisor, but you can directly report abuse to one of these agencies:

Child

National Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-422-2253	Office of Mental Health	1-877-356-5355
Child Line & Abuse Registry	1-800-932-0315	OLTL Helpline	1-800-757-5042
Allegheny County Children & Youth Services	1-412-350-5701	Dept. of Public Welfare	1-877-401-8835

Adult

Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging	1-412-250-4234
---------------------------------------	----------------

Domestic Abuse

Women's Center & Shelter	1-412-687-8005	Dept. of Health Division of Nursing Care Facilities
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence	1-800-537-2238	1-800-254-5164

In West Virginia

Abuse Hot Line	1-800-352-6513
----------------	----------------