

ELDER ABUSE HITS CLOSE TO HOME

Call 0800 EA IS NOT OK or Age Concern 0800 65 2 105



ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS 15 - 22 JUNE

What to do when you suspect elder abuse? Trust your gut!

Elder Abuse Key Trends:

For several decades Age Concerns in most regions of New Zealand have worked with older people and their families to reduce the harm of elder abuse and neglect. Over the past year Age Concerns have dealt with an average of **ten new cases** each working day. From our work we can verify that:

Age Concerns worked with 2452 cases of which 68% had abuse identified.

43% of cases the older person was under 75 years of age.

35% of cases the older person was living alone but 57% live with partners and/or relatives.

These statistics include the impact of Covid-19 in 2020-21 when elder abuse and neglect has hit close to home, yet it was not being openly discussed. Living alone made some older people an easier target for abuse, having to rely on others for basics like shopping and paying bills. But elder abuse happens in households where others live too, as younger family members access online options and manipulate bank cards for their own benefit. Anybody who suspects that something is not right with how an older person is being “helped” in their home, can **ring Age Concern to talk through what they have noticed.**

83% of cases include psychological abuse.

40% of cases involve financial abuse.

32% of cases involve neglect and self-neglect.

20% of cases involve physical abuse.

For older people, psychological factors underline most abuse such as the threats of physical violence, or the neglect of their physical and emotional needs. Financial abuse happens more often with bank closures, cheques disappearing, requirements to pay and verify identity online and use smart phones. Covid-19 restrictions affected the livelihoods of many families, and older people have tried to help their relatives through tough times. But when older people are pressured to sacrifice their own health needs, their home, car, savings, or their retirement income for the benefit of others, we encourage you to trust your gut and **please seek advice first** such as raising your queries with Age Concern.

84% of alleged abusers were family members of which 58% were adult children or grandchildren.

72% of the alleged abusers are aged under 60 and 51% live with the older person.

68% of cases the abuse has continued for longer than 3 months, and 31% longer than a year.

When an older person is coerced, isolated, threatened and manipulated, the abuse robs them of their self-esteem, independence, and finances. This is usually by someone an older person loves, who visits or lives with them, so Elder Abuse Hits Close To Home. You can **discuss your worries with Age Concern** as our services are independent of your family, free, and confidential.

Contact details for all services are available at: **0800 65 2 105** or www.ageconcern.org.nz