

FACING THE FACTS:

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT ONE OF FACT'S *VIOLENCE AT HOME* INDICATORS

OLDER ADULTS AND FAMILY VIOLENCE



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As Virginia's population of older adults increases, it is important that communities strengthen their efforts to protect older adults from abuse and neglect. This brief identifies forms of family violence and abuse faced by older adults and summarizes research on effective ways communities and households can identify and prevent further abuse. Promising strategies designed to protect the safety and security of the older adult population within the Commonwealth of Virginia are highlighted.

Introduction

By the year 2050, the population of adults aged 65 and over in the United States is projected to be 88.5 million—more than twice the older adult population in 2010.¹ The number of older adults in the Commonwealth of Virginia is also expected to increase dramatically—reaching 1.8 million by 2030.² Communities across the country are preparing to meet the needs of the growing numbers of adults who seek to “age in place” within their own homes and communities. A critical piece in adapting to this demographic shift is strengthening opportunities for older adults to live secure, violence-free, and connected lives within their homes and neighborhoods. According to a national American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) survey of older adults, nearly 90% of people over

age 65 want to stay in their home for as long as possible, and 80% believe their current residence is where they will always live.³

While older adults are expected to live longer than the generation before them, they are expected to be in relatively worse health as they age due to growing rates of chronic diseases such as obesity and diabetes.⁴ Despite advancements in public health and education during their lifetime, older adults today are more likely to have a health problem that may result in difficulty performing all of the necessary activities of daily living.⁵

This trend in poor health outcomes, coupled with a strong preference for remaining in the home environment as they age, will likely impact the number of older adults who rely upon

a familial caregiver or live in relative isolation in the future. While most older adults receive care by a family member in their homes,⁶ research indicates that the majority of older adult abusers are family members.^{7,8}

Defining the Problem of Family Violence Against Older Adults

Elder abuse includes the physical, sexual, financial, emotional, and psychological abuse or neglect of an older adult by a person involved in a relationship with the older adult that entails an expectation of trust.⁹ Elder abuse can also be defined as a targeted act of violence or deception directed towards an elder person by virtue of the older adult's age or disabilities. Family violence against an older adult is defined in this report as elder abuse perpetrated by the family member's relative—whether spouse, adult child, or other family member.

In a given year, over 11% of older adults report at least one form of mistreatment.¹⁰ With perhaps as few as 16% of older adult abuse cases being reported to authorities,¹¹ actual rates of abuse are expected to be much higher than documented. Older adults are likely to avoid reporting instances of abuse. For example, older adults may not report financial exploitation by a family member because they are unaware the financial exploitation has occurred, are embarrassed or ashamed of the abuse, lack an understanding of the protective and legal process, are reluctant to report family members for fear of retaliation or abandonment, or are concerned that reporting may result in a loss of their independence.¹²

Understanding Abuse Rates and the Risks Faced by Older Adults

According to the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services' Adult Protective Services (APS) Division, substantiated reports of abuse or neglect of older and incapacitated adults have increased by approximately 3% each year since 2006.¹³ Of the Commonwealth's nearly 11,000 APS substantiated reports of abuse or neglect in 2012, 21% involved neglect, 10% involved financial exploitation, 7% involved physical abuse, 6% involved mental abuse, 2% involved another type of exploitation, and 1% involved sexual abuse.¹⁴

In 2009, nationally-representative survey data collected by the United States Department of Justice indicated the following prevalence rates of elder abuse:¹⁵

- ➔ 5.1% of older adults experienced neglect; 74% of the perpetrators were family members.
- ➔ 4.6% of older adults experienced emotional mistreatment; 57% of the perpetrators were family members.
- ➔ 1.6% of older adults experienced physical mistreatment; 76% of the perpetrators were family members.
- ➔ Less than 1% of older adults experienced sexual mistreatment; 52% of the perpetrators were family members.
- ➔ Over 5% of older adults experienced financial exploitation by a family member in the prior year.

Most incidents of elder abuse are not reported and never reach the attention of authorities.¹⁶ It is estimated that 84% of abuse cases in domestic settings go unreported,¹⁷ effectively denying abuse victims the protection and support they need.

Barriers to Detection

The difficulties of detecting elder abuse by a family member are often compounded by the relative isolation of the older adult within the home setting. Many older adults are less involved in social situations outside the home than their younger counterparts, thereby limiting the number of people who may see evidence of an abusive situation.

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, the actual number of older adults who experience abuse by a family member is difficult to quantify. Elder abuse goes unreported to the proper authorities for a variety of reasons. Many older adults may be unable to report the abuse due to a physical or mental disability, such as dementia or Alzheimer’s disease. Other reasons for not reporting abuse include fear of retaliation by the abuser, embarrassment, or lack of awareness of the proper agencies to contact.¹⁸

Strong preferences for “aging in place” and a belief that they may be placed in a nursing home or senior assisted living facility¹⁹ mean that some older adults being victimized by a family member may choose to remain in the abusive situation rather than risk displacement from their home setting.

Warning Signs and Characteristics Associated with Abuse of Older Adults

Recognizing some of the more common warning signs of elder abuse by a family member is helpful in preventing early or ongoing incidents of abuse. Some level of caregiver stress can be anticipated when caring for older adults, yet the warning signs below extend beyond typical caregiver stress to indicate a level of dysfunction that can escalate to an episode of family violence. Warning signs for increased risk of abuse of an older adult include the caregiver’s expression of

- ➔ being “caught between” or “overwhelmed by” his or her caregiving responsibilities;
- ➔ low self-esteem;
- ➔ high levels of anxiety, depression, or “burn out”; or
- ➔ fear of becoming violent towards an older adult in their care.²⁰



The behavior of older adults can be a factor in incidents of abuse by a family member. Older adults who are combative with their caregiver, verbally abusive, or exhibit disturbing or embarrassing public behaviors, including paranoia about their caregiver, are more likely to become victims of abuse.²¹

Family caregiver violence toward an older adult is further complicated by the relationship history between the caregiver and the elder, particularly when the caregiver has experienced episodes of family violence as a child under the care of the older adult. The risk of elder abuse increases if the caregiver and care receiver live together or had a poor relationship or conflicted marriage prior to the onset of the care receiver's need for assistance or decline in physical or mental health.²²

Signs of elder abuse are frequently very difficult for neighbors, community members, healthcare professionals, and law enforcement officers to detect, particularly when older adults experience abuse under the care of an adult child or close family member. However, some common characteristics associated with certain forms of elder abuse may assist these individuals in identifying possible abuse situations.

➤ **Financial Exploitation:**

Older adults living alone, who have no children, and who perceive a trusted relationship with the perpetrator are at increased risk. When caregivers are responsible for caring for their own children and are single, they may have a greater tendency to financially exploit an older adult in their care.²³ Older adults expressing unexplained disappearance of funds, valuables, or personal belongings; lack of awareness of income; or excessive payment for care or services may be victims of financial exploitation.²⁴

➤ **Physical Abuse:** Older adults who are widowed or relatively isolated and those with some mental health problems are at increased risk. Risk increases for older adults living with the adult child perpetrator when childhood family violence was present in the adult child's upbringing or where a long history of abuse exists. Older adults who are aggressive towards the caregiver are also at increased risk of physical abuse.²⁵ Older adults with signs of multiple or severe bruises or welts, old and new bruise marks, burns, broken glasses or glass frames, or those expressing fear towards their caregiver may be victims of physical abuse.²⁶

➤ **Neglect:** Older adults with communication problems or dementia, who are dependent upon their caregiver to assist with meeting their basic needs, are at increased risk for neglect, particularly when a history of childhood family violence exists between caregiver and the older adult. Typically the older adult does not express fear towards his or her perpetrator, as is often present in cases of physical violence.²⁷ Older adults with untreated medical conditions or health problems such as bed sores, dehydration, malnutrition, dirt, or lice or flea infestations may be victims of neglect. In addition, older adults who live in homes with non-functioning toilets or poor heating, water, or electrical systems may also be victims.²⁸

➤ **Hybrid Financial Exploitation (HFE) or Financial Exploitation Co-occurring with Physical Abuse and/or Neglect:**

Older adults living with their adult child, when the adult child experienced childhood family violence or a long history of abuse, are at greater risk for HFE. Older widowed adults, those in poor health, those who fear their caregiver, and those who feel isolated and are unable to drive are also at increased risk for HFE. When caregivers are unemployed, unable to drive, and are financially dependent upon an older adult family member, they may be at greater risk for perpetrating both financial exploitation and physical abuse or neglect.²⁹

Experiencing victimization at the hands of a trusted family member can cause extreme stress during and after an incidence of maltreatment; some older adults experience intense psychological distress similar to post-traumatic stress disorder.³⁰ Older adult victims of abuse may blame themselves, appear depressed, and suffer loss of self-esteem. Other signs of psychological distress associated with abuse may include disturbed eating and sleeping, noncompliance with medical treatment, despondency, self-helplessness, stress, withdrawal, and progressive dependency upon others.³¹



Collaboration across agencies has the potential to improve responses to individual cases of abuse and create a wider network of support for older adults.

Barriers to Inter-Agency Collaboration

Barriers to collaboration among agencies include overloaded caseworkers, limited funding for elder abuse prevention, and a lack

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of awareness regarding the number of elder abuse victims within the Commonwealth.³² Rapidly increasing caseloads for overworked responders, such as APS caseworkers and domestic violence counselors, is a frequently cited reason for the absence of available hours to participate in interagency collaboration.³³ Further, many service providers offer group-specific services (e.g., care for women involved in cases of domestic violence) and do not necessarily

accommodate their programs and services to meet the needs of older adults. This presents a challenge for interagency initiatives seeking to gain participation from a full range of service providers.

When responding to allegations of older adult abuse, the contrast between social service workers and law enforcement officials was recently highlighted in a statewide survey of 71 APS workers and older adult victims of reported abuse. While APS workers focused on the safety, security, and well-being of the older adult victim, law enforcement officials were almost exclusively focused on the perpetrator.³⁴ Singular perspectives pose the risk of missing critical details, such as the nature of the caregiver relationship, deemed necessary to respond comprehensively to elder abuse.

Currently, there is no direct federal funding support for state Adult Protective Service programs.³⁵ Lack of federal funding and the significant reduction in state funding to provide services has resulted in limited resources to assist older adult victims of family violence during a time when the incidences of older adult abuse are increasing.³⁶ With a rapidly expanding older adult population, the problem of limited resources will only increase should current funding levels for elder abuse not increase proportionately.³⁷

Communication among agencies tasked with ensuring the safety, well-

being, and protection of older adults and their caregivers is key in creating positive outcomes for both populations. Within Virginia, a focused, collaborative effort to improve services for older adults has included the relocation of the Virginia Department of Social Services' APS Division to the newly formed Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), effective July 1, 2013. In July 2012, DARS was created through the merger of the Virginia Department for the Aging (VDA) and the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)—a step towards promoting interagency collaboration to meet the often complex needs of aging and elderly adults and adults with mental and physical disabilities.³⁸

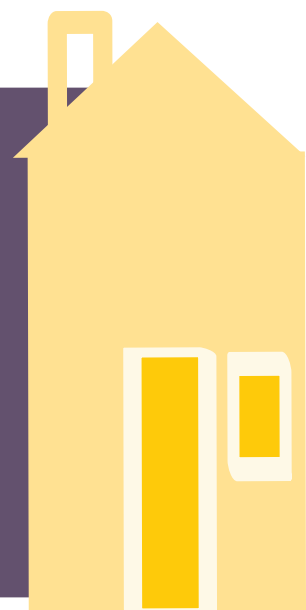
When Collaboration Works: Promising Strategies in Elder Abuse Prevention

The community efforts described vary widely based on local resources and needs. One promising effort within

Virginia includes the Elder Justice Task Force of the New River Valley. This community task force on domestic violence and older adults is jointly spearheaded by a domestic and sexual violence program in the City of Radford and the local Agency on Aging. Other promising programs, such as the Greater Augusta Coalition Against Adult Abuse and local TRIADs, comprised of law enforcement, senior organizations, and senior citizens, provide collaborative models for effective responses to older adult maltreatment issues.

In addition, some communities within the Commonwealth of Virginia are addressing the health, safety, housing, transportation, and security needs of a growing population of older adults and creating “Age Wave” plans.³⁹ As this planning occurs, there is potential for increasing awareness of the prevalence of elder abuse by a family member as well as developing strategies for prevention and intervention.

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SPOTLIGHT

Elder Justice Task Force of the New River Valley: Improving Community Response by Increasing Awareness and Collaboration

The New River Valley region in Southwest Virginia has some of the state's longest-running collaborative efforts to combat elder abuse. The New River Valley Agency on Aging has provided services to seniors since 1975, including a regional elder justice coalition created in 2009. In 2003, the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley—a service provider to victims of domestic and sexual abuse—began to explore improving outreach and services to older victims and created a task force with that mission. In the summer of 2013, the two organizations joined forces to create the Elder Justice Task Force of the New River Valley, convening local APS workers; domestic violence and sexual assault responders; and mental health, forensic nursing, long-term care, and gerontology professionals. The goal of the Task Force is to increase awareness of elder abuse and improve community response.

Task Force operations are funded via grants raised through its participating organizations (the New River Valley Agency on Aging or the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley) and voluntary in-kind support and community participation.



What the Task Force Does

Much of the Task Force's work promotes increased awareness of elder abuse among practitioners and the general public. Some of the Task Force's efforts include

- ➔ hosting community trainings and conferences on elder abuse;
- ➔ distributing information on elder abuse at conferences and public health fairs;
- ➔ developing and publishing pocket guides for first responders aimed at recognizing warning signs of elder abuse, including financial abuse, and directing them to appropriate resources; and
- ➔ holding community forums to discuss issues of elder financial abuse with panels of local professionals.

One of the Task Force's fundamental contributions to the New River Valley is bringing the community together across individual professions, fostering relationships among practitioners to better prepare them to make referrals, and helping older adults locate the services they need.

When a local physician, who attended a training on recognizing domestic violence among older adults, encountered a patient who showed signs of abuse, the doctor knew what questions to ask and was able to refer the patient to appropriate resources. In another instance, professionals from the Women's Resource Center, the area's Agency on Aging, the courts, and a long-term care facility worked together to assist an elderly victim in obtaining a protective order against her abusive husband without her having to leave her long-term care setting.

Lessons Learned

According to Mary Beth Pulsifer, Community Engagement Coordinator with the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley and a co-facilitator of the Task Force, three things are critical to making a community safer for older adults:

- ➔ Collaboration: No single agency in the community can address all the issues involved in elder abuse. People and organizations must work together.
- ➔ Raising community awareness: As more people become educated

about the signs of abuse and neglect, they are more likely to recognize a situation where something is wrong. As older adults become aware that there are safe places to discuss issues of abuse, they may be more likely to seek help. Based on these lessons, the New River Valley collaborates with other social service agencies such as the AARP, faith-based organizations, local law enforcement, and local senior organizations.

- ➔ Recognizing and tailoring responses to older adult mistreatment as a population with unique needs: Older victims of abuse have needs that differ from younger victims. Service providers need to be flexible in accommodating services to the older population. One successful strategy at the Women's Resource Center is a group for only those victims aged 50 and over to share their experiences and support one another.

For more information on the Elder Justice Task Force of the New River Valley, contact task force co-facilitator Mary Beth Pulsifer, Community Engagement Coordinator with the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley (communityoutreach@wrcnr.org, 540.639.9592).

SPOTLIGHT

Greater Augusta Coalition Against Adult Abuse: Promoting Safe Communities through Targeted Education and a Coordinated Legal Response

A collaborative effort formed in 2010, the Greater Augusta Coalition Against Adult Abuse (GACAAA) is an all-volunteer organization working to raise awareness of adult abuse in the community and improve reporting procedures and criminal prosecution of adult abuse crimes. GACAAA members include representatives from senior centers, assisted living facilities, healthcare, social service organizations, first responders, law enforcement, local financial institutions, Legal Aid, Commonwealth attorneys, and APS representatives working in Augusta County, Staunton, Waynesboro, and surrounding areas. GACAAA partners with state and local service providers to improve public understanding of adult abuse with the goal of increased reporting, treatment, and prosecution of adult abuse.

GACAAA is a non-profit organization with operations funded through grants from federal (e.g., the Administration on Aging), state (e.g., FACT), and local private, non-profit, or philanthropic organizations. Most often, donations or gifts obtained from these sources support specific projects. In-kind donations made by Coalition members and volunteers also support program operations.



What GACAAA Does

GACAAA sponsors an annual training conference, open to the public and professionals across the state, to convene national adult abuse experts so they can instruct the community in effective investigation and prosecution of abuse

cases. Prosecuting abuse of older adults presents unique challenges that require specialized knowledge of interview methods with older victims, how to establish abuse when perpetrators present alternative explanations of neglect or financial exploitation, and evidence that is most useful for effective

prosecution. In some cases, prosecution may proceed after a victim has decided not to bring charges against a familial abuser or is deceased.

GACAAA seeks to raise public awareness of adult abuse by maintaining a presence at conferences and community events, setting up exhibits and distributing informational materials, and arranging for members to speak about adult abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation at public events. Within local medical offices, the organization distributes awareness cards on the signs of adult abuse and reporting procedures. In 2013, GACAAA promoted World Elder Abuse Awareness Day by co-sponsoring a billboard in Staunton and recruiting staff at local businesses to wear adult abuse awareness badges.

GACAAA members maintain group communication and connectivity via an email listserv to share trainings, recent research, and needs in the community. The listserv is public and enables GACAAA members to stay involved even if they miss a GACAAA meeting. Anne See, co-chair of GACAAA, indicated that the organization's efforts have resulted in increased adult abuse reporting and prosecution in the surrounding region.

Lessons Learned

One notable challenge to maintaining a new adult abuse prevention effort is the retention of community members after the initial excitement of a new collaboration has waned. In GACAAA's early days, its leadership found success in reaching out to individual organizations and community members to request their participation and expertise. "Personal contact is what really makes a difference," according to See. Matching individuals or organizations with specific interests and expertise in elder services to projects where their skills are needed has kept momentum going in Augusta County.

For more information on GACAAA, contact co-chair Anne See, Elderly Services/Public Benefits Paralegal with Blue Ridge Legal Services (asee@brls.org, 540.433.1830) or co-chair Derek Almarode, Corporal with Augusta County Sheriff's Department (dalmarode@co.augusta.va.us, 540.245.5333).

SPOTLIGHT

Virginia TRIAD: Reducing Crime Against the Elderly

What is TRIAD?

TRIAD is a partnership of law enforcement, senior organizations, and senior citizens working together to educate and support older community members. The first TRIAD chapter began in 1988, when the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) determined that effectively addressing crime-related needs among the elderly subpopulation required cooperative efforts. Virginia's first TRIAD chapter was started in 1995; today there are 55 TRIADs across the Commonwealth, covering 230 Virginia counties, cities, and towns.

A primary goal of all TRIAD chapters is keeping older adults safe in their communities through effective crime prevention, strengthened elder-law enforcement communication, and community education. TRIAD helps foster understanding by overcoming stereotypes of the elderly and assists older citizens in connecting with others in their community.

The Virginia State TRIAD Office and Virginia S.A.L.T. (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) Council host an annual training conference on issues for seniors and community safety. Local programming varies by TRIAD chapter; however, basic

offerings may include regular community meetings, legal assistance, adopt-a-senior programs, and consumer fraud information.

Specialized services include Senior Citizen Police Academies, where law enforcement officers teach older adults how to prevent crimes against themselves and others; Project Lifesaver, a tracking bracelet for older adults with cognitive impairments that helps law enforcement locate a lost senior; and File of Life, a summary of information on medications, allergies, and emergency contacts for emergency responders to consult if needed. Most local programs are offered to the public free of cost.

Funding for TRIAD operations varies by location. Most support for TRIAD efforts comes in the form of donations and in-kind support, unless funding is obtained for a specific effort, such as performing an evaluation of the community or local efforts.



Information on Virginia's TRIAD efforts—including chapter contacts and activities and how to start a TRIAD—can be found through the state TRIAD office, online at <http://www.oag.state.va.us/Programs%20and%20Resources/TRIAD/index.html>.

STATE RESOURCES

☑ **Virginia Adult Protective Services (APS)**

APS investigates reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults aged 60 years and older and incapacitated adults aged 18 and older and may arrange for a variety of health, housing, social, and legal services to stop mistreatment and prevent further abuse. To report suspected adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation, call the local department of social services or the 24-hour, toll-free hotline. Hotline: 888-832-3858

☑ **Virginia Coalition for the Prevention of Elder Abuse**

This coalition of agencies and individuals is committed to improving the lives of older and disabled Virginians and hosts an annual conference on the prevention of adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Website: www.vcpea.org

☑ **Virginia Division for the Aging**

The Virginia Division for the Aging fosters the independence and well-being of older Virginians; supports their caregivers through leadership, advocacy, and oversight of state and community programs; and guides the Commonwealth in preparing for an aging population. Website: www.vda.virginia.gov

☑ **Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS)**

VDSS provides online Adult Protective Service (APS) educational materials, including a “mandated reporter” training module. Website: <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/abuse/mr.cgi>

☑ **Virginia Senior Navigator’s Take Back Your Life**

This solution center focuses on providing resources to help empower individuals who are concerned with domestic violence in later life. Website: <http://www.virginianavigator.org/tbyl/>

☑ **Virginia TRIAD: Reducing Crime Against the Elderly**

TRIAD works to reduce the fear of crime and victimization among older adults by increasing awareness of scams and frauds targeting them, strengthening communication between law enforcement and senior communities, and educating older adults on local and state resources that are available in their community. TRIAD organizes speaking engagements, community collaborations, and educational training for seniors and law enforcement practitioners and provides support to local TRIAD groups. Website: <http://www.ag.virginia.gov/Programs%20and%20Resources/TRIAD/index.html>

NATIONAL RESOURCES

☑ **American Association for Retired Persons (AARP)**

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that provides a wide range of resources and services targeted for people aged 50 and over. A special section on the AARP website (<http://www.aarp.org/indexes/life.html#caregiving>) offers information for caregivers on financial planning, durable powers of attorney, trusts, and insurance. Website: <http://www.aarp.org>

☑ **ARCH National Respite Network**

The ARCH National Respite Network includes the National Respite Locator, a service to help caregivers and professionals locate respite services in their community. Website: <http://archrespite.org/>

☑ **Clearinghouse on Abuse and Neglect of the Elderly (CANE)**

CANE is the nation's largest and most utilized computerized collection of elder abuse materials and resources; the site produces annotated bibliographies for professionals and the public. Website: <http://www.cane.udel.edu/>

☑ **Commission on Legal Problems of the Elderly/American Bar Association**

The Commission operates a listserv for practitioners, administrators, educators, health professionals, researchers, law enforcement, and policy makers, which provides a 24-hour/7-days per week online connection to others working on elder abuse issues and monitoring state laws on elder abuse. Website: <http://www.elderweb.com/organization/aba-commission-legal-problems-elderly>

☑ **Eldercare Locator**

The Eldercare Locator, a public service of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging, connects older adults and their caregivers with information on senior services, outreach materials, and contact information. Hotline: 1-800-677-1116 Website: www.eldercare.gov

☑ **Elder Justice Coordinating Council**

The Elder Justice Coordinating Council works to prevent elder abuse, including financial exploitation, physical abuse, neglect, psychological abuse, and sexual abuse, by protecting the rights of older adults who may not be able to protect themselves. Website: http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/Elder_Rights/EJCC/index.aspx

☑ **Family Caregiver Alliance (FCA)**

The national FCA pioneers programs in information, education, services, research, and advocacy to support and sustain family members caring for loved ones with chronic, disabling health conditions. Website: <http://www.caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/home.jsp>

☑ **National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA)**

This membership organization provides advocacy to improve the quality of services for elderly persons at the national level and assists state and local APS administrators in securing technical assistance, developing resources, and educating the public and legislative bodies about the needs of dependent adults. Website: <http://www.napsa-now.org/>

☑ **National Association of State Units on Aging (NASUA)**

NASUA produces and disseminates information on domestic and institutional elder abuse through a monthly newsletter and a website that includes basic information, a publications list, and frequently asked questions. Website: <http://www.nasuad.org/>

☑ **National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA)**

NCEA provides information on research, training, best practices, data, resources, and expertise on elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation to federal, state, and local agencies; professionals; and the public. Websites: <http://www.elderabusecenter.org> and <http://ncea.aoa.gov>

☑ **National Center for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NCPEA)**

NCPEA is an association of researchers, practitioners, educators, and advocates dedicated to protecting the safety, security, and dignity of America's most vulnerable citizens. Website: <http://www.preventelderabuse.org/>

☑ **National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)**

Through advocacy and education, the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL) works to improve and promote victim safety, increase abuser accountability, expand coordinated community response to allegations of abuse, and ultimately end incidences of abuse in later life. Website: <http://www.ncall.us/>

ENDNOTES

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- ³³ Lisa Furr (President of the Virginia Coalition for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and Project Coordinator for the Central Virginia Task Force on Domestic Violence in Later Life), interview with Casey Cox, April 8, 2013.
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- ³⁵ From state fiscal year (SFY) 2010 to SFY 2012, funds appropriated for home-based care to prevent elderly abuse were decreased by 34%. In SFY 2010, the General Assembly appropriated \$3 million for local departments of social services to purchase services such as food, utility reconnection, and temporary shelter for elderly victims of abuse. Between SFY 2010 and SFY 2012, this funding was reduced and then eliminated. With the decrease in funding, nearly 1,000 fewer vulnerable adults received home-based services within the Commonwealth of Virginia. Funding is not presently available to train mandated reporters such as medical professionals and law enforcement officers about the signs of abuse and their professional responsibility to report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Source: Paige McCleary (Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)), personal communication, October 10, 2013.
- ³⁶ The number of APS reports of abuse increased by 17% to nearly 20,000 between SFY 2010 and SFY 2012. Paige McCleary (Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)), personal communication, September 30, 2013.
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