OASIS Alert

Clip & Save: Learn Elder Abuse Basics

You may be the patient's last hope.

Home health agency clinicians working with the elderly play a critical role in stopping elder abuse and neglect.

The patient may not raise the issue, perhaps out of fear of the caregiver's wrath. But every OASIS assessment gives you a chance to detect signs of abuse and reach out to provide encouragement and support. And your outcomes may improve in the process.

The definitions: Elder abuse is any form of mistreatment that results in harm or loss to an older person, instructs the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse based in Washington, DC. It includes the following seven categories, NCPEA says:

1. Physical abuse: physical force that results in bodily injury, pain or impairment. It includes assault, battery and inappropriate restraint.

2. Sexual abuse: non-consensual sexual contact of any kind with an older person.

3. Domestic violence: an escalating pattern of violence by an intimate partner where violence is used to exercise power and control.

4. Psychological abuse: the willful infliction of mental or emotional anguish by threat, humiliation or other verbal or nonverbal conduct.

5. Financial abuse: the illegal or improper use of an older person's funds, property or resources.

6. Neglect: the failure of a caregiver to fulfill his or her caregiving responsibilities.

7. Self-neglect: failure to provide for one's own essential needs.

Note: For more information, go to http://www.preventelderabuse.com.