

## **Signs of Neglect**

### **Signs of Neglect Observed in the Home**

- **Absence of necessities including food (an empty refrigerator), water, heat in the winter or air-conditioning in the summer (as dictated by the environment)**
- **Inadequate living environment evidenced by lack of utilities, sufficient space, and ventilation**
- **Animal or insect infestations**
- **Signs of medication mismanagement, including empty or unmarked bottles or outdated prescriptions**
- **Housing is unsafe as a result of disrepair, faulty wiring, inadequate sanitation, substandard cleanliness, or architectural barriers**

### **Signs of Neglect That Are**

### **Related to the Person's Physical Condition**

- **Poor personal hygiene including soiled clothing, dirty nails and skin, matted or lice-infested hair, odors, and the presence of feces or urine**
- **Unclothed, or improperly clothed for weather**
- **Decubiti (bedsores)**
- **Skin rashes**
- **Dehydration, evidenced by low urinary output, dry fragile skin, dry sore mouth, apathy, lack of energy, and mental confusion**
- **Untreated medical or mental conditions including infections, soiled bandages, and unattended fractures or the presence of conditions that should be controlled by medication such as diabetes**
- **Absence of needed dentures, eyeglasses, hearing aids, walkers, wheelchairs, braces, or commodes**
- **Exacerbation of chronic diseases despite a care plan**
- **Worsening dementia**

## **Behavioral Indicators**

### ***Observed in the Caregiver or Abuser***

- Expresses anger, frustration, or exhaustion
- Isolates the senior from the outside world, friends, or relatives
- Obviously lacks caregiving skills
- Is unreasonably critical and dissatisfied with social and health care providers and changes providers frequently
- Refuses to apply for economic aid or services for the senior and resists outside help

### ***Observed in the Victim***

- Exhibits emotional distress such as crying
- Exhibits symptoms of depression or despair including being disengaged or despondent, “flat” affect, talking about suicide
- Has nightmares or difficulty sleeping
- Has had a sudden loss of appetite that is unrelated to a medical condition
- Is confused and disoriented (this may be the result of malnutrition or being improperly medicated)
- Is emotionally numb, withdrawn, or detached
- Exhibits regressive behavior (which may include a sudden inability or lack of interest in performing daily care tasks that were previously manageable)
- Exhibits self-destructive behavior
- Exhibits fear toward the caregiver
- Expresses unrealistic expectations about their care (e.g., claiming that their care is adequate when it is not or insisting that the situation will improve)