



Elder Abuse – Private Shame, Public Disgrace

by Patricia O'Malley, RN, MS, JD

Elder abuse happens everywhere and it flourishes in silence. Abusers are friends, neighbors, caregivers, strangers, even family. More often than not victims know their abusers. Abusers can be opportunistic exploiters of the victim's dependency and isolation; or deliberate predators acting in complete disregard of victim rights or well being. Victimization can be an expression of anger, greed, or frustration; stem from lifelong patterns of dysfunctional relations or can involve substance abuse, sociopathy, or significant disparity in financial statuses. Abuse occurs across all social strata, freely crossing ethnic, cultural and economic boundaries. Annually reported cases average 4% of the population over age sixty-five. Unreported case estimates range anywhere from one to fourteen times the number of reported cases. The sheer number that creates is staggering—nearly 8 million people may well be being victimized.

Abuse can literally be physical battery – pushing, shoving, pinching, restraints, forced sexual contact, neglect, withholding medication, nutrition, or hydration – either to make the victim do something or stop doing something. It can take the form of financial exploitation – opportunistic encouragement of “gifts”, “loans”, outright theft of cash, securities, stripping the home of saleable items, overbilling, deliberate schemes to defraud and use of victim resources for personal gain. Abuse can be emotional as well, involving verbal insults or

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Caregivers Nominated For National Award

by Veronica Wathome

United Spinal Association Tops Half a Century of Service

By Donna Fredericksen, Director, Public Affairs

In recognition of its valued Caregivers, *GRISWOLD SPECIAL CARE* launched an Annual National Caregiver Award program in September 2005. Nominees for the ten awards came from offices in the *GRISWOLD SPECIAL CARE* network. Recipients received a commemorative certificate and \$100.00 dollar award.

The goal of the program is to recognize outstanding service and show appreciation and gratitude to more than 9000 Caregivers nationally. The award program is also consistent with the company's commitment to improving the image of professional Caregivers within the homecare industry.

This years recipients include:

Marie O'Neil for the Phoenix Award; **Charlene McDowell** for the Grapevine Award; **Monica Boateng** for the Pinch Hitter Award; **Beatrice Gardner** for the Angel Award;

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For nearly 60 years, the United Spinal Association has committed itself to improving the lives of individuals with a spinal cord injury or disease. Its initiatives, whether in research and education, government policy and legislation, civil rights and advocacy, accessibility and architectural design, or adaptive sports have made United Spinal the fastest growing disability rights organization in the country. In addition to helping write the Americans with Disabilities Act, United Spinal was also instrumental

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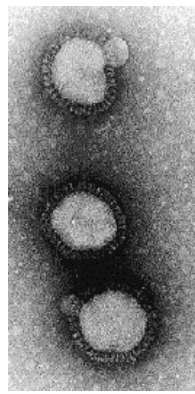
Special points of interest:

- *Flu Vaccination* Pg. 2
- *New USDA Food Pyramid* Pg. 2
- *Free Email Subscription And Web Access* Pg. 4

National Adult Immunization Awareness Week: September 25-October 1st: It's Time To Get Vaccinated! *By Diane Walker MS, RN*

It's a fact: according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), "the single best way to prevent yourself from getting the flu is to *get vaccinated every fall.*" (1) That way, you have time to build up immunity before flu season begins. In the United States, flu season usually starts in December and can last until March.

Each year 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu. More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications including pneumonia, dehydration, and worsening medical conditions such as congestive heart failure and asthma. About 36,000 deaths occur each year from the flu. (2)



While anyone can get the flu, adults 65 years and older and people with diabetes, spinal cord injury, MS, ALS, and compromised respiratory function are especially at risk. Caregivers are also at greater risk because of association with their care recipient.

Flu symptoms include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, nausea and vomiting. If you get the flu, rest, drink lots of fluids except alcohol, and consult with your doctor about medications that relieve the symptoms of the flu. Better yet, get a flu shot and stay healthy!

- (1) CDC (2005). Key Facts About Influenza and Influenza Vaccine. www.cdc.gov/flu.
- (2) CDC (2005). Influenza: The Disease. www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease.htm.

Disability Division *by Kent Griswold, Ph.D., M.B.A.*

This Spring, *GRISWOLD SPECIAL CARE* created a new disabilities division because 31% of persons living with a disability who have long term care needs are 65 years of age *or younger* and this population has often been neglected by the home care industry. The division was started to assure Clients who have a disability that their Caregivers have demonstrated a fundamental knowledge of their specific disease and can competently address their unique needs for care.

Members of the corporate staff are now actively working with four advocacy groups to

create educational materials and competency examinations that will demonstrate proficiency by the Caregivers. Caregivers who successfully complete the examination will receive a certificate of achievement from the national organization as a (Disability Name) Care Specialist. After then working 500 or more hours with one or more persons with that disability, they will then become certified as a (Disability Name) Care Professional.

The organizations we are currently joining forces with are the National MS Society, the United Spinal Association, the Arthritis Foundation, and the Greater

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What's In the New USDA MyPyramid *by Diane Walker, MS, RN*



Perhaps exercise and politics? For over a decade, Americans have relied on the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) for dietary guidelines about what and how much to eat. But according to the Harvard School of Public Health, the new MyPyramid, "doesn't convey enough information to help you make informed choices [and] continues to recommend foods that aren't essential to good health, and may even be detrimental in the qualities included in MyPyramid." (1)

Released in January 2005, the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans *do* recommend: weight control; physical exercise; reducing trans and saturated fats, and limiting sugar intake in favor of whole grains. The guidelines fail to encourage eating fish, poultry

and beans in place of (even lean) red meats and still recommend eating dairy products that can be high in saturated fats. So, Harvard came out with its own "Healthy Eating Pyramid" reportedly based on the best scientific evidence available.

If you are caring for an older adult, you can find out more about the Harvard plan and simple ways to assess nutritional status at our website www.griswoldspecialcare.com

- (1) Harvard School of Public Health (2005). Food Pyramids. <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/pyramids.html>.

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threats, shouting, profanity or isolation.

There is a “profile” of likely victims—they are more often women, customarily over the age of 80, socially isolated and lacking resources, have dependency needs (either financial, physical or emotional), they may have substance abuse or mental health issues, including dementia. Victims often feel shame, embarrassment or even responsible for what is happening to them.

Signs of abuse may include bruising, weight loss, new confusion, guarded responses, lost eye contact, never alone with visitors, lapses in care, left alone when unable to self evacuate in event of crisis, left alone when unable to self-care, locked doors, poor personal hygiene, sudden changes in long time relationships or trusted advisors, changes in finances, wariness, self-neglect, witnessed verbal or physical exchanges, odd pattern injuries like “grab” marks or on odd areas of the body, poor explanations for occurrences, lack of necessary helping devices, items missing from the home, inappropriate item purchases, fearfulness of caregiver or family member, home visits are refused, odors, poor hygiene, poor environmental condition in presence of assets. While the presence of two of more of these signs is not absolute proof, they are nevertheless cause for concern and intervention.

Family caregivers may be overwhelmed with the care needs of a dependent family member. Abusers may have no sense of the wrongness of their actions or have rationalized it to the point of not even acknowledging their involvement in the pattern or abuse or neglect. Adult day care, outside caregiving resources and frequent respite can help relieve the pressures that often lead to abusive episodes. Support groups, counseling and increasing social contacts can provide support and safe environments for abusers to self report. This permits intervention in relationships where history, dementia, substance abuse, social isolation and lack of resources have combined in one way or another to create the abusive environment. Providing victims with a variety of caregivers, outlets of expression, safe opportunities to report and information concerning others in similar situations can empower those able to assist themselves to stop the cycle of abuse. Involving authorities in positions to provide outside assistance can become necessary when the victim is unable to self-assist with support or the abuser is not able to step back long enough to get help.

The best possible responses to abuse are acknowledgement, recognition, and courageous advocacy. Once you acknowledge the problem exists, it is incumbent upon those in contact with potential victims to recognize the signs and then to intervene promptly and effectively. Only then will there be an end to the public disgrace and private shame that is abuse of our greatest generation.

More information is available at www.elderabusecenter.com. You can also visit our website to find additional information and links to other sites.

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in drafting portions of the Fair Housing Amendments Act and the Air Carrier Access Act, each of which has immeasurably advanced the civil rights of people with disabilities. To date, United Spinal has provided over \$52 million for cutting-edge spinal cord research and helped launch two of the most prominent research facilities in the nation at the Yale School of Medicine and the James J. Peters Veterans Affairs Medical Center in the Bronx, New York. The Association also hosts the largest annual gathering of spinal cord injury/disease health professional in the county. To help citizens better understand the social, political, and regulatory issues affecting the disabled community, the Association offers a number of free pamphlets and workshops on topics including disability etiquette and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Membership in United Spinal Association is free and open to all people with disabilities of the spinal cord. For more information about all of the organization’s programs, please visit www.unitedspinal.org. or call 800-404-2898.

National Awards *continued...*

Christy Day for the Monarch Award; **Rebecca Agyei** for the Sirius Award; **Susie Kortemeyer** for the Mentor Award; **Phyllis Hirschauer** for the Bell Flower Award; and **Bette Featheringill** for the CAP Award. The awards were presented at the Fall Executive Committee Meeting. For a complete description of the award categories, please visit our website at www.griswoldspecialcare.com.

Congratulations to all those Caregivers who were nominated in 2005!

Disabilities *continued...*

Philadelphia Chapter of the ALS Association. In addition to staff from these advocacy groups, individuals with the disabilities are also actively involved in editing the materials. Future certification programs are planned to address Alzheimer’s, stroke, AIDS, Parkinson’s, MH/MR, and cancer. We welcome additional suggestions.



GRISWOLD SPECIAL CARE

A Tradition of Homecare Excellence



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Today's Caregiver Magazine, recognized *GRISWOLD SPECIAL CARE* in 2003 with the magazine's first annual **Caregiver Friendly Award**. Today's Caregiver Magazine is a national publication dedicated to assisting family caregivers.

CARING TIMES and Its Companion Web Page



GRISWOLD SPECIAL CARE

The **CARING TIMES** newsletter and its companion online resource center are a service *GRISWOLD SPECIAL CARE* offers to Clients, family caregivers, and professionals who care for older adults and individuals living with a disability. Experts in gerontology keep you current with helpful articles, legislative updates, tips on caregiving, news about organizations and more.

- ◆ Tax Related Issues
- ◆ Legal Documents: POA and Living Wills
- ◆ The Nutritional Needs of Older Adults
- ◆ Dementia: The Disease and New Hope for Treatment, Parts I and II
- ◆ Home and Community Based Care: What Consumers Want And Need

You will also find links to other national organizations that offer supportive services to family caregivers.

On-line Caregiving Resources

Our website (www.GriswoldSpecialCare.com) includes a resource center that is designed to help make it easier for you to provide and arrange for care in the home. At this site, you will have access to past newsletter articles and other topics. Check the website each month for the latest information. Here are some of the features that are currently posted:

- ◆ A brochure to prevent falls at home
- ◆ The Caregivers Marketplace
- ◆ Welcoming A Caregiver Into Your Home
- ◆ Preventing Caregiver Burnout

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