

# People's Health

Outcomes • Planning • Evaluation



## Know the Facts: Elder Abuse

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Elder abuse includes several types of violence that occur among those aged 60 and older. Six common types include financial, emotional, physical, neglect, abandonment and sexual.
- In the United States, more than 500,000 older adults are abused or neglected each year. This means 1 in 10 older adults experience abuse, not including financial abuse.
- Only 1 in 14 cases of elder abuse ever comes to the attention of authorities.
- Elders who experience abuse have a 300% higher risk of death and higher levels of psychological distress and physical health problems when compared to those who had not been abused.
- The annual financial loss by victims of financial exploitation was estimated at \$2.9 billion in 2009.

### WHERE WE WERE (BASELINE):

In Shasta County, there were 28.1 reported cases of elder abuse per 1,000 persons aged 65 and older in 2000.

### WHERE WE ARE:

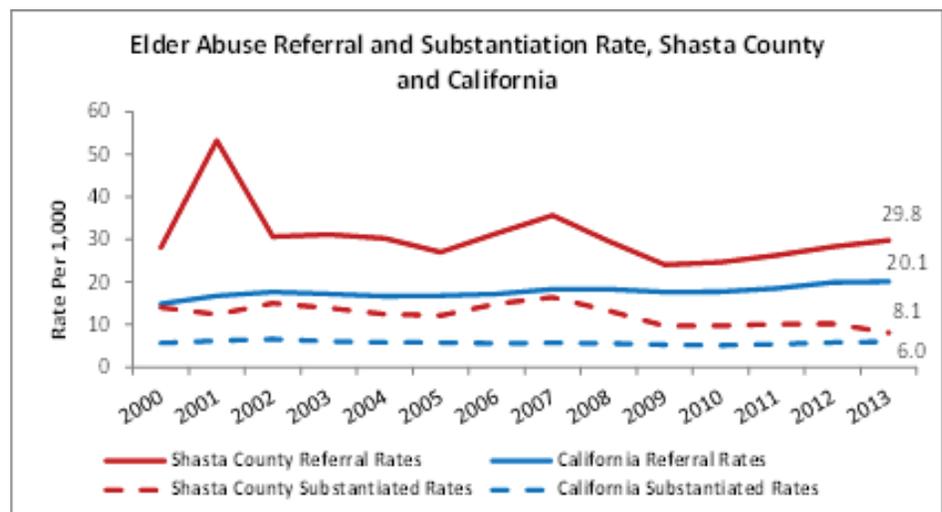
In Shasta County, there were 29.8 reported cases per 1,000 persons aged 65 and older in 2013.

### WHERE WE ARE AIMING (HEALTHY PEOPLE 2020 GOAL):

Not established.

### DEFINITION:

Estimated rate of referral reports received (per 1,000 population age 65 and older) for maltreatment of an older person (over 65 years of age) including financial, emotional, physical, neglect, abandonment and sexual by someone who has a special relationship with the elder (spouse, sibling, child, friend or caregiver.) Estimated rate of substantiated cases (per 1,000 population aged 65 and older) for maltreatment of an older person (over 65 years of age) including financial, emotional, physical, neglect, abandonment and sexual by someone who has a special relationship with the elder (spouse, sibling, child, friend or caregiver.)



**Contributing Staff:** Ali Abadi and Stephanie Taylor. Last updated April 2016.

Find more health information at [www.shastahhsa.net](http://www.shastahhsa.net). Click on "Health and Safety," then "Current Health Concerns." Questions? Email [shastahealthdata@co.shasta.ca.us](mailto:shastahealthdata@co.shasta.ca.us)

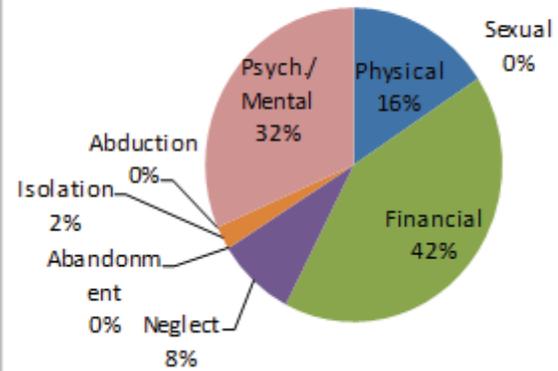
## KEY POINTS:

- Both elder abuse referral and substantiation rates for Shasta County were higher than statewide averages during the past decade.
- Although the rate of elder abuse referral in California has increased from 14.9 to 20.1 per 1,000 between the years of 2000 and 2013, the rate of substantiated cases has not changed significantly.
- In 2013, about 42% of substantiated elder abuse cases in Shasta County were financial (as compared to 34.6% in California). Psychological/mental (32%) and physical (16%) abuse were the next most frequent types, similar to the California rates of 31% and 16.4%, respectively.

## PRIMARY PREVENTION ACTIVITIES:

- Know the background of caregivers and new acquaintances offering assistance for elderly loved ones.
- Share duplicates of all bank statements and bills with a trusted impartial party outside the home, other than the main caregiver.
- Support a mandatory, standardized hospital protocol for screening and reporting elder abuse.
- Know available elder services offered by reputable service organizations.
- Prevent isolation of seniors by helping create multiple sources of social support.
- Take seriously elders' comments and concerns that suggest possible abuse.
- Listen to elders and their caregivers.
- Report abuse or suspected abuse to Adult Protective Services (530-225-5798).
- Educate yourself and others about how to recognize and report elder abuse.
- Learn how the signs of elder abuse differ from the normal aging process. Learn the physical and behavioral indicators of elder abuse.
- More information is available at [www.helpguide.org/mental/elder\\_abuse\\_physical\\_emotional\\_sexual\\_neglect.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/mental/elder_abuse_physical_emotional_sexual_neglect.htm)

**Substantiated Elder Abuse Perpetrated by Others, Shasta County, 2013**



## From the Desk of Andrew Deckert, MD, MPH

*Shasta County  
Public Health Officer*



Each year, hundreds of thousands of older adults are abused, neglected or financially exploited - and sadly, the vast majority of abusers are family members, most often adult children and spouses.

If you know someone who cares for the elderly and is experiencing stress, encourage them to use some of these tips:

- Get help from friends, family, or local relief care groups.
- Take a break— if only for a couple of hours.
- Involve more people than just family in financial matters.
- Find an adult day care program.
- Seek counseling or other support if you are feeling depressed.
- If you are having problems with drug or alcohol abuse, get help.

***To your health!***