What should you do if you suspect abuse?

Talk to the older person and ask what help they want.

Contact someone you think can help.

Where to go for help:

♦ Aged Care Assessment Teams
♦ Doctors
♦ Hospitals
♦ Community nurses
♦ Community Health Centres
♦ Solicitors
♦ Community Legal Centres
♦ Police
♦ Migrant Resource Centres
♦ Migrant welfare organisations

For information about who you can talk to in your local area, contact the Seniors Information Service on 13 12 44.

If you need an interpreter please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50 and ask to be connected through to the Seniors Information Service on 13 12 44.

All NSW agencies dealing with older people now have a process in place for dealing with situations of abuse.

If the first person you contact doesn't help, keep trying.

Contacts in your area
What is abuse of older people?

Any behaviour which causes harm to an older person is abuse.

Financial abuse:
Illegal or wrongful use of an older person's money or valuables.

Psychological abuse:
Intimidating, humiliating or threatening an older person.

Physical abuse:
Physically hurting an older person, eg hitting, pushing, burning.

Sexual abuse:
Sexually harassing or assaulting an older person.

Neglect:
When someone who is caring for an older person doesn't give them food, clothes, shelter or health care.

Who is involved?

Abuse can happen to any older person.

Abuse often occurs in a relationship of trust. The abuser could be a husband or wife, child, family member, caregiver or friend.

Why don't we hear more about abuse of older people?

It's only recently that we have begun to recognise that abuse of older people does occur.

Victims are often isolated, so others can't see what's going on.

Victims may feel ashamed that someone they trust is doing this to them.

The older person may feel he or she is the only one in that situation.

They may fear what will happen if they tell someone.

The older person may feel that he or she is to blame.

Other people's views about older people may stop them from recognising the problem.

Why does abuse happen?

The older person may be dependent on others for care.

The abuser may have drug or alcohol problems.

The abuser may have dementia and not realise what he or she is doing.

The caregiver may be very stressed.

Family members and others may be financially dependent on the older person.

What should you do if you are being abused?

Talk to someone you trust.

If you are hurt see a doctor.

If you are worried about your money or property see a solicitor.

If you believe a crime has been committed contact the Police.

(see over page: Where to go for help)