



Provider Guide: Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Older Adults

This guide is designed to help health and human service professionals provide support and safety planning for older adults experiencing IPV.

OBSTACLES THE CLIENT MAY FACE

- Dependency on the abusive partner for personal, medical, financial, legal care
- Social isolation
- Dementia or other forms of cognitive impairment
- Physical frailty
- Compromised ability to access abuse-reporting mechanisms (police, hotlines) and public systems (i.e. transportation, courts, and shelter) to increase safety

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN INTERACTING WITH THE CLIENT

- **Reluctance to Report**
The client may be hesitant to report abuse due to perceived bias that older adults do not experience IPV or because of guilt around their care needs. Assure the client that they are not alone. Approximately 1 in 10 adults report experiences of abuse in later life.
- **Cognitive Limitations**
If the client has dementia, memory loss or other cognitive impairments, offer to write out directions, agreed-upon goals or helpful next steps in easy-to-read large font size. IPV occurs at a higher rate amongst older adults with cognitive impairments.
- **Accessibility of the Courts**
The client may need specific accommodations for transportation, medication, and medical equipment/devices to utilize civil and criminal court systems. See the resource list on the following page to connect them with proper provider(s).

USEFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK THE CLIENT

- **Who are your current support systems?**
Remember that the client may experience social isolation, and thus, may not have trusted family and friends to call for assistance and support. If this is the case and if it is safe for the client, offer to program resource phone numbers into the client's cell phone.
- **Do you live in congregate housing (e.g. a nursing home, assisted living, senior housing, etc.)?**
Work with the client to identify safe and supportive employees in their housing programs with whom they regularly interact or who are involved with site management or security. If the client feels comfortable, you can offer to contact the appropriate personnel together to ask for additional security or support.
- **Do you have a caregiver (live-in nurse, home health aide, family member who assists with your care, etc.)?**
Recommend that the client informs their caregiver(s) of abusive actions against them and the abusive partner's tendencies. If the client's abusive partner is the caregiver, please direct the client to the appropriate resources to get assistance.
- **Do you regularly take medication and/or use medical/assistive equipment? If so, what accommodations would you need if you must leave your home?**
Recommend to the client they always keep an up-to-date list of their medications and charged batteries on their person. Suggest that the client arrange with their doctor to have portable or back-up equipment available on request.



Provider Guide: Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Older Adults

RESOURCES

SUPPORT/ADVOCACY

Center for Advocacy for the Rights & Interests of the Elderly (CARIE)

(215) 545-5725 or (800) 356-3606
1599 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 1500

Pennsylvania Elder Abuse Hotline

(800) 490-8505

Pennsylvania Link to Aging and Disability Resources Center

(800) 753-8827

Philadelphia Corporation for the Aging, Older Abuse Protective Services

(215) 765-9040
642 N. Broad St.

Philadelphia Senior Center

(215) 546-5879
509 S. Broad St.

Journey's Way

(215) 487-1750
403 Rector St.

Center in the Park

(215) 848-7722
5818 Germantown Ave.

LEGAL SERVICES

Community Legal Service of Philadelphia

(215) 981-3700 (Center City)
(215) 227-2400 (North Philadelphia)
1414 Chestnut St. and 1410 W. Erie Ave.

Elder Justice & Civil Resource Center

(215) 686-7027/8/9
1400 John F. Kennedy Blvd., City Hall Room 278

Legal Clinic for the Disabled

(215) 587-3158
1513 Race St.

Philadelphia Legal Assistance

(215) 981-3800
718 Arch St. #300N

SeniorLAW Center

(877) 727-7529 or (215) 988-1242
2 Penn Center, 1500 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 1501

Women Against Abuse Legal Center

(215) 686-7082
100 St. Broad St., Suite 1341