

Fóilseánacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

## Overview of Elder Abuse Referrals to the HSE

*Bridget McDaid,*  
Dedicated Officer, Elder Abuse – HSE West

**15<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Elder Abuse Data Collection

- Commenced in 2007
- Senior Case Workers (SCW) are providing anonymised statistical data on each referral.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Number of referrals Nationally

- 2007: 927
- 2008: 1840
- 2009: 1870

**Under-reporting!**

---

---

---

---

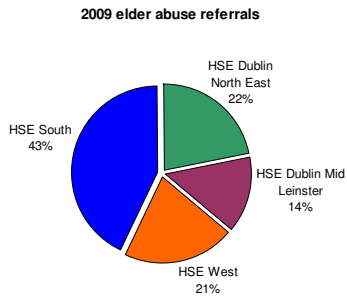
---

---

---

---

## Referrals by HSE area



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Elder Abuse Data Collection Process

Information collected to 2 stages

- Initial record of referral
  - Who is the client: gender, age?
  - What type of abuse has been alleged?
  - Who is the person allegedly causing concern: gender, relationship?
  - Gardai involved?
- Follow up – what has happened since
  - Gardai / legal action?
  - Interventions for client
  - Services / actions taken re person allegedly causing concern
  - Other issues for both parties
  - Status & outcome of case

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Gender & Age of those referred

**62% Female**

This pattern is consistent across all HSE Areas

**68% of clients referred are over 75 years of age**

**45% of clients referred are over 80 years of age**

---

---

---

---

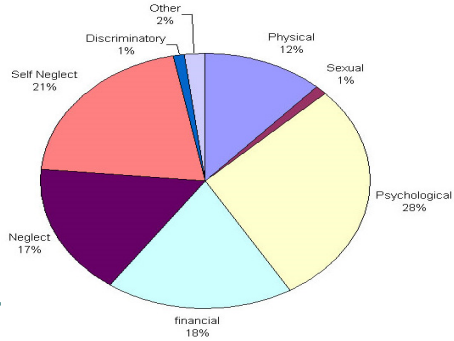
---

---

---

---

## Type of abuses alleged




---

---

---

---

---

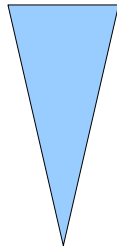
---

---

---

## Source of Referrals

<b>Public Health Nurse</b>	<b>(40%)</b>
<b>Family</b>	<b>(14%)</b>
<b>Hospital</b>	<b>(11%)</b>
<b>Other HSE Staff</b>	<b>(10%)</b>
Carer / Home Help	(6%)
Other	(6%)
Self	(5%)
GP	(3%)




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Primary place of residence of clients

### 83% Living at home

- 7% Private NH
- 5% Relatives home
- 3% Public continuing care
- 2% Other

In **95%** of cases abuse was alleged to have occurred in the persons place of residence

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Person allegedly causing concern

Most often family members  
son/daughter (46%)  
other relative (20%)  
Partner/husband Spouse (18%)

Other persons allegedly causing concern but less so  
other category  
Neighbour  
carer / staff  
other service user

**In over half of cases the alleged abuser and alleged victim live together**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## client

- Health issues
  - Physical (36%)
  - Dementia (25%)
  - Mental Health (20%)
  - Other (8%)
  - Alcohol (7%)
  - Drugs (1%)
- Interventions
  - Monitoring (22%)
  - Home support (16%)
  - Counselling/support (16%)
  - Ref to other service (10%)
  - Long term care (8%)
  - Respite (8%)
  - Advocacy (7%)
  - Day care (7%)
  - Conflict mediation (6%)

(cases reviewed n=921)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## persons allegedly causing concern

*Only 28% were identified as having a possible health issue*

- Issues
  - Alcohol
  - Mental Health
  - Other:
    - Carer stress
    - Financial
    - Family dynamics
- Actions / services
  - Support offered
  - Referred to other service:
    - Mostly mental health & addiction services
  - Garda Action 5%

(cases reviewed n=921)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Gardaí & Legal involvement

- Consultation with An Garda Síochána 12%
- Referrals to An Garda Síochána 17% (*up 7% on 2008*)
- Legal consultation 8%
- Legal action 3%

*(cases reviewed n=921)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Outcome & Status of cases

- 21% - allegation substantiated
- 32% - deemed non abuse
- 47% - inconclusive

*(cases reviewed n=921)*

The majority of cases are closed within 6 months (82%)

At year end 50% of 2009 cases remain open  
15% of 2008 cases remain open

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Financial Abuse example

- 78 year old gentleman living alone
- Son
  - Taking some of pension
- Self referred (disclosed to HC worker)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Physical abuse example

- 82 year old lady
  - dementia
- Lives with son
  - main carer
  - Locks mother indoors while he works
  - Farm hazards
- PHN referred

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Psychological & physical abuse example

- Husband and wife in 70s
- Living with son
- Father helps on farm
- Son
  - Verbal abuse
  - Pressure on father to work on farm
  - Kicked father – leg injury
- Self referred
- Gardaí & legal proceedings

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### SCW interventions

- Responding to needs and wishes of older person
- Safety and protection of the older person
- Empowerment of older person
- Inter HSE – inter agency response involving older person themselves and their family where appropriate

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Acknowledgements

**Statistical analysis:-**

Marguerite Clancy, Older Persons Services, HSE West  
Bridget McDaid, Dedicated Officer HSE West

**Data Input:-**

Bridget McDaid, HSE West  
Con Pierce, HSE South  
Sarah Marsh, HSE Dublin Mid Leinster  
Jackie McCormack, HSE Dublin North East

**Data returns:-**

Senior Case Workers – Elder Abuse

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---