

The Helpline Advocacy Role: Supporting Older Adult Victims

WEAAD Presentation

June 15, 2023

Today's Speakers

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Today's Agenda

- An Introduction to the Minnesota Elder Justice Center (MEJC)
- Elder Abuse: A Brief Summary of Concepts
- A Holistic Lens
- Collaborative Service Delivery
- MEJC's Interdisciplinary Team
- Consultative Support Services

The Minnesota Elder Justice Center

- Our Mission: Mobilizing communities to prevent and alleviate abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of older and vulnerable adults.
- Our Values: MEJC is committed to being an anti-racist organization, and creating an environment that promotes the understanding of and appreciation for the value of diversity, equity, inclusion and cultural humility.
- Our Work: Public Awareness; Professional Education; Public Policy; and Direct Service.

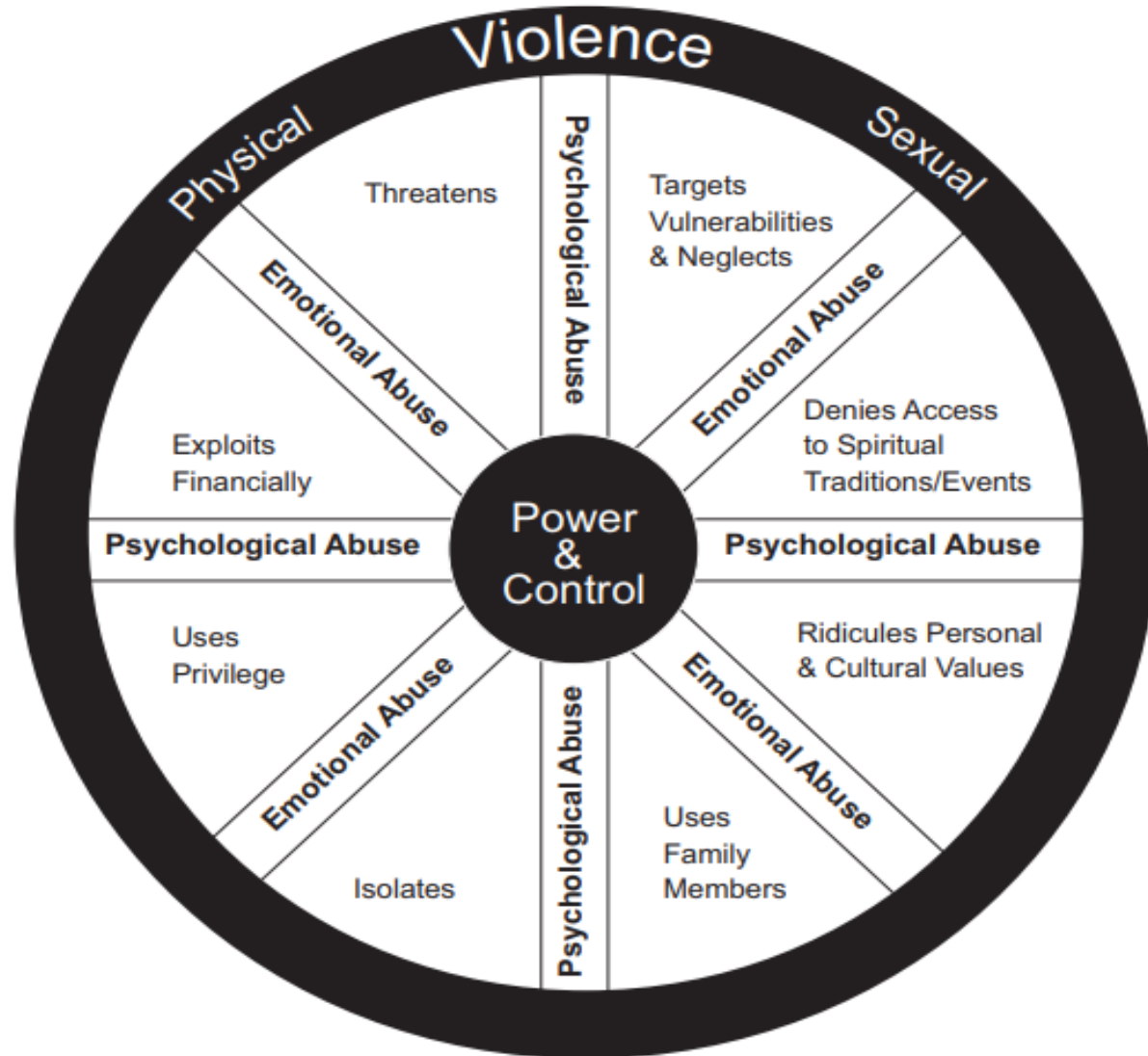
Our Services

- To access a Victim Services advocate:
- Call 651-440-9312
- “Victim Services” form on our website:
<https://elderjusticemn.org/our-services/victim-services/>

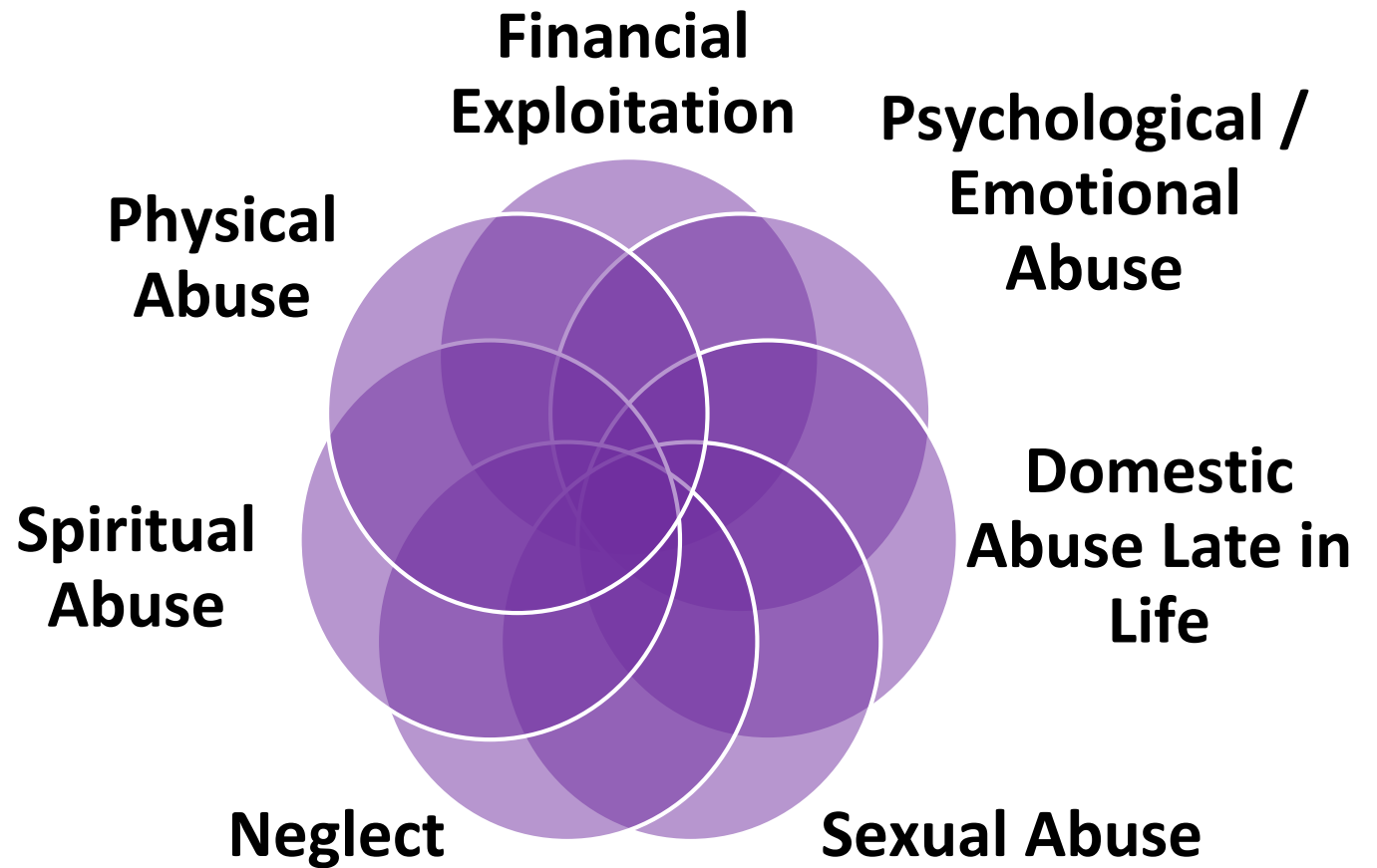
Defining Elder Abuse

A broad definition of elder abuse is any knowing, intentional, or negligent act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm, or introduces a preventable risk of harm to an older adult. In a majority of cases of elder abuse, there is **an ongoing relationship with an expectation of trust.**

Abuse in Later Life Power & Control Wheel



Poly-victimization



* Source: Dong, X., Simon, M. A., & Gorbien, M. Elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation: Risk factors and prevention strategies. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 33, 5-25. (2007).

National Institute for Justice
<https://nij.ojp.gov/library/podcast/defining-studying-elder-abuse-polyvictimization#:~:text=So%2C%20polyvictimization%20is%20the%20co,a%20societal%20expectation%20of%20trust.>

Coercive Control

- Moves in with elder due to insufficient resources, often under the guise of being helpful
- Denies access to information and records
- Imposes multiple forms of isolation

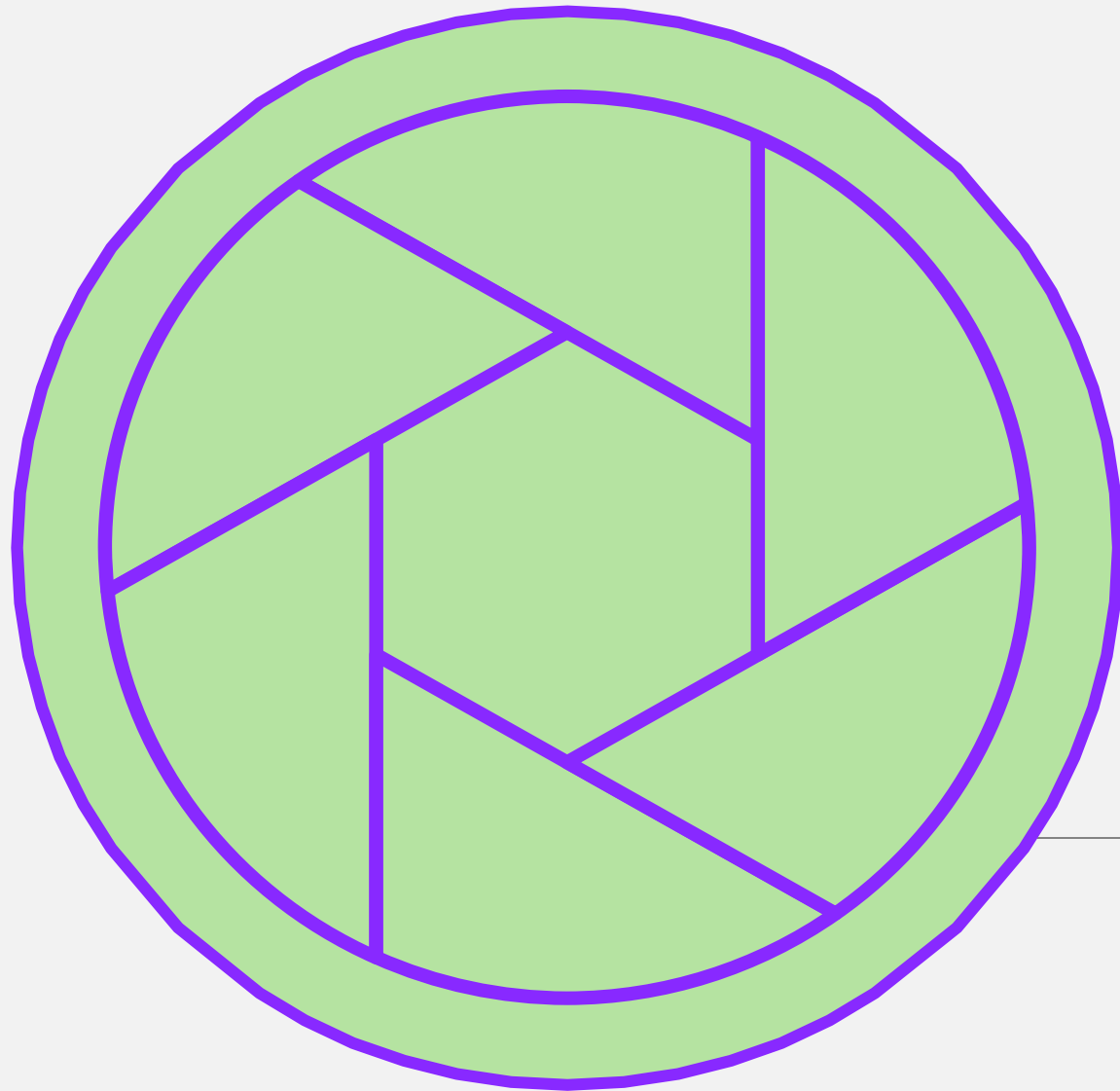
Coercive Control

- Unilaterally decides to move the elder from their home
- Erroneous claim of legal authority or inappropriate use of a valid POA or HCD to control the elder

Elder Abuse as Domestic Violence

MEJC Contacts:

- About 65% of participants report the perpetrator is a family member, friend, or someone they know through other associations
- Financial exploitation is discussed in 2/3 of MEJC Helpline calls
- Many Helpline callers experience more than one type of victimization



Direct Services
Viewed Through a
Holistic Lens

Direct Services

- Historically – Problem and Problem Solving Focused
- Problem Identification
- Deficit Identification

Shifting Focus

- Person Centered Services
- Life Experience
- Strengths Identification
- Participant Driven Goals - Outcomes
- Personalized Resources

Empowerment

Support

Tools

- Respect
- Listening
- Information
- Systems Navigation
- Participant Led Planning

Holding Trauma Informed Space



Agendas Are Suspended

Judgment Free

Validation

Compassion

Participant Defined Outcomes

- Walking Side By Side With The Participant
- Listen For Conflicts
- Listen For Priorities
- Provide Feedback That Summarizes Salient Points Made By Participant

Putting the Pieces Together



A Holistic Lens



Seeks to see a person in the context of their whole life rather than a context defined by their problems

Collaborative Advocacy

- Internal Collaboration
 - Directly with caller
 - Victim Services team consultation
- External Collaboration
 - Family, friends, and other social supports
 - Professionals service providers

Internal Collaborative Advocacy

Directly with Callers

- Empathetic listening
- Discuss priorities & goals
 - What does justice look like to you?
 - What resolution are you looking for?
- Create a plan to address those goals
- Availability as plan is enacted



Internal
Collaborative
Advocacy

Victim Services Team Consultation



Victim Services Team

Interdisciplinary Experiences

- Social Worker
- Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocate
- Nursing Home Staff
- Paralegal
- Attorney
 - Civil legal aid
 - Private practice
- Waiver Services Direct Service Provider
- Personal & Professional Caregiving Experience

External Collaborative Advocacy

Social Supports

- Family
- Friends
- Coworkers
- Faith or Community Groups

Value of Time & Empathetic Listening

- Building relationship
- Developing rapport and trust
- Healing in being heard
- Appropriate referrals



External Collaborative Advocacy

Professional Service Providers

- Care Providers: Family, Professional, and Volunteer
- Ombudspeople
- Attorneys: Legal Aid, Nonprofit Organizations, Private Sector, Court Appointed Attorneys, and Volunteer Pro-Bono

External Collaborative Advocacy

Professional Service Providers

- Culturally Specific Elder and Domestic Abuse Programs
- Interpreters
- Facility Social Workers
- Other Community Based Organizations

Consultation - Technical Assistance

- Victim Advocacy, Legal, and Intersecting Issues
- Case Management Consultation
- Systems Navigation
- Client Rights
- Supported Decision Making and Guardianship
- Financial Exploitation

Consultation Technical Assistance

Service Providers

- Ombudspeople
- Waivered Services Providers
- Attorneys: Legal Assistance and Non-Profit
- Adult Protective Services
- Domestic Abuse Programs

Consultation Technical Assistance

Service Providers

- Should I Call?
- MEJC Wants To Talk With You
- Stronger Together –
 - Mutual Learning
 - Mutual Support
- Coalition Building

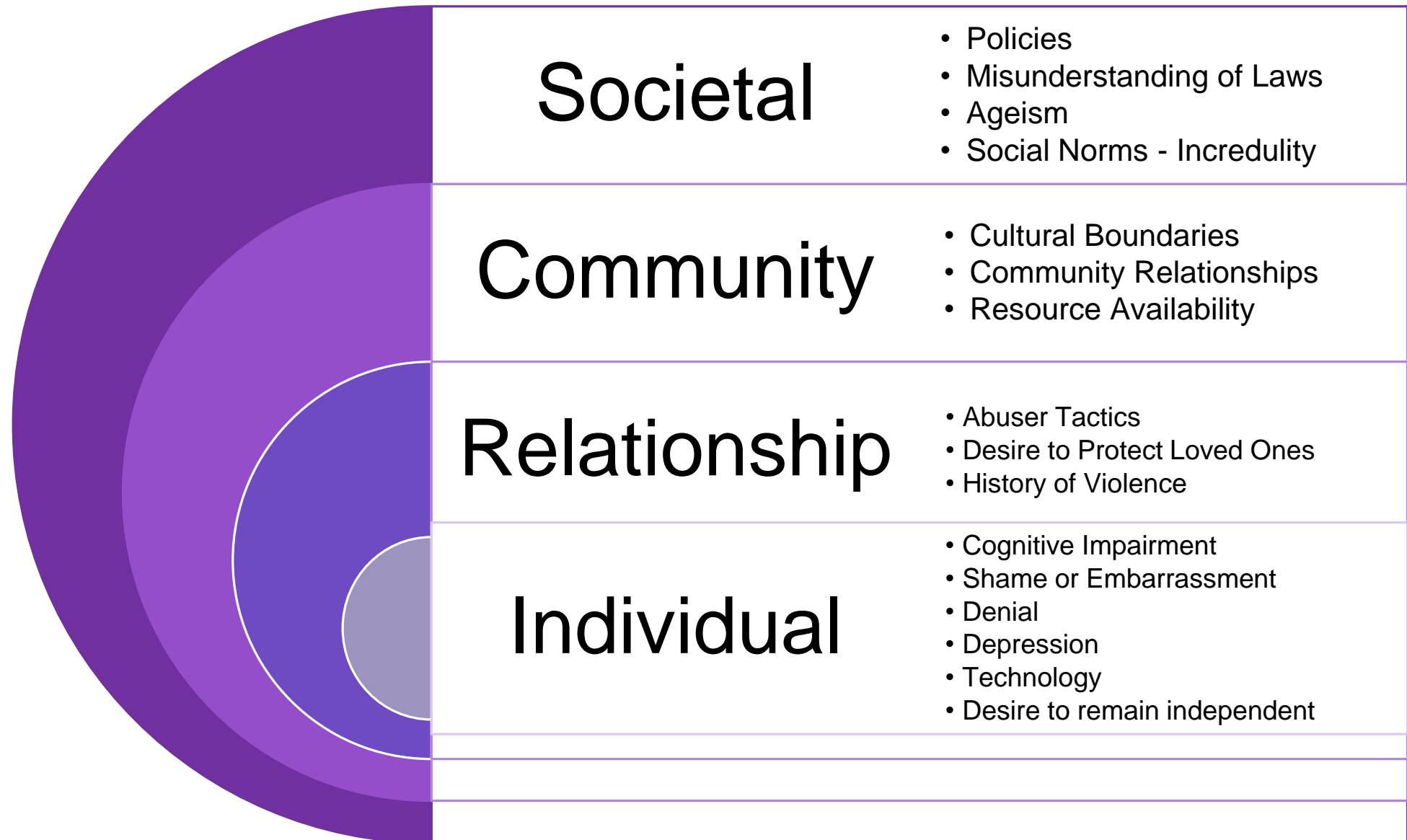
Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center (MAARC)

Single toll-free number: **844-880-1574**

- Available 24 hours per day
- Immediately notifies county agency (APS); law enforcement (crime); Med Ex, Ombudsman for MH (suspicious death)
- Refers directly to Lead Investigative Agency

Feedback to: dhs.adultprotection@state.mn.us

Reporting Barriers: Social-Ecological Model



The Minnesota Elder Justice Center

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Questions

- What would you like MEJC to know about your work?
- What resources would help you collaborate with other professionals to alleviate elder abuse?
- Are there new or especially challenging trends you are seeing in your elder abuse work?