



National Foundation for the Elderly  
Elder abuse and negligence: Recognizing pressure  
on informal caregivers

4<sup>th</sup> of October, Istanbul

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## An Introduction to the NFE - Mission

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The NFE is a charity that promotes quality of life for older persons in the Netherlands. The primary focus is on preventing isolation, reflected by the Forget-Me-Not Logo.

The NFE develops projects, services and campaigns that:

- Prevent isolation and loneliness
- Promote healthy and active ageing
- Combat poverty
- Promote safety and security



# An Introduction to the NFE - The ElderlyOmbudsman

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- A hotline that helps seniors to find the path in the maze of rules and regulations of service providers.
- Answers questions in relation to health, care, lifestyle and financial issues.



OUDEREN  
OMBUDSMAN



- Was launched in June 2012, with a platform and phone helpdesk, supported by volunteers and professionals.

The ElderlyOmbudsman received many calls on elder abuse.  
**Hence in 2013 the NFE started a campaign together with MOVISIE to raise awareness on elder abuse.**

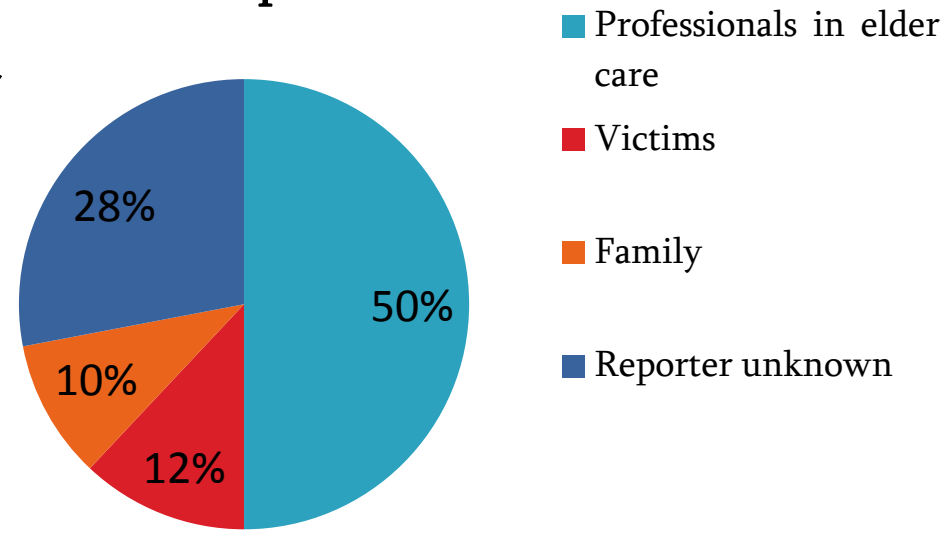
# Elder abuse and negligence – Reporting and register elder abuse

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- Reports of elder abuse are made to:
  - the domestic violence hotline
  - the elder abuse hotline
  - the ElderlyOmbudsman
  - consultation networks
  - care points
- Registration has been formalised since 1st of July 2013, with a single registration method in order to get insight in the nature and size of the problem in the Netherlands.

- Most reports of elder abuse are made by professionals or volunteers in care.

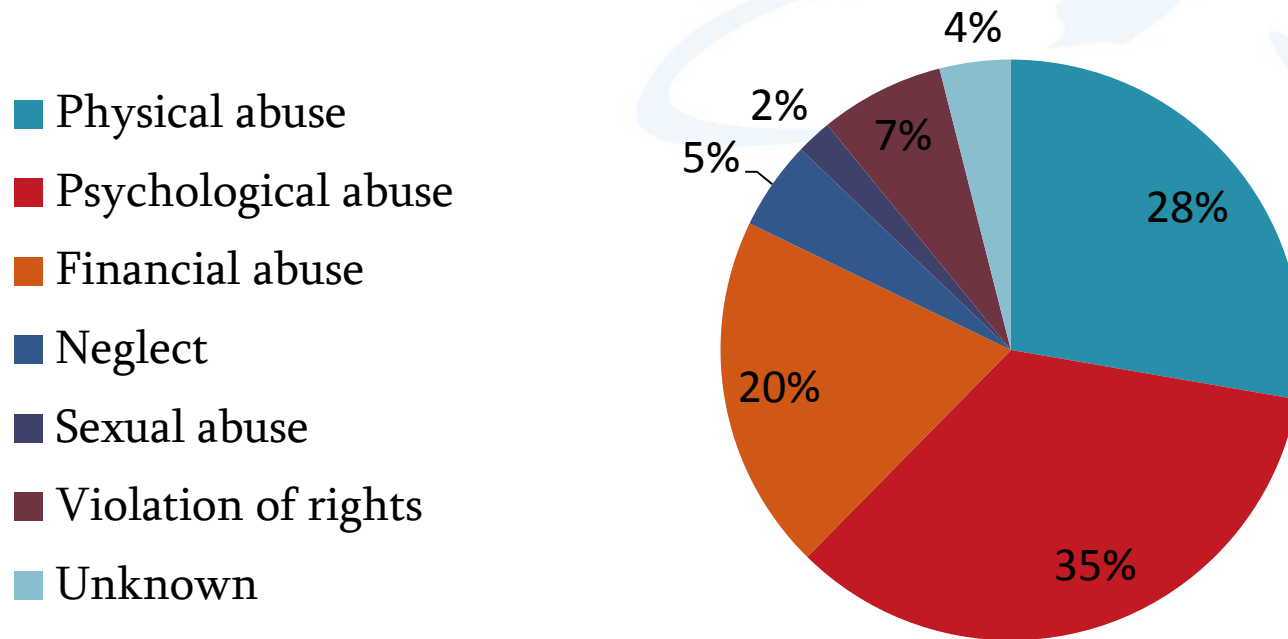
**Reporter of elder abuse**



## Elder abuse and negligence – Reporting elder abuse

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### Types of registered elderly abuse in the Netherlands in 2012

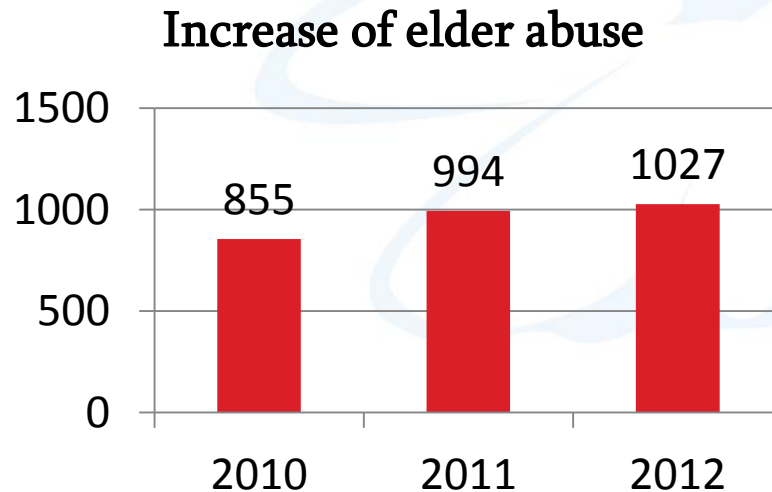


In 98% of the registered cases, the perpetrator of elder abuse is a family member (partner, child, grandchild or other family).

## Elder abuse and negligence – Reporting elder abuse

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- Amount of reports only reflect a fraction of the actual amount of elder abuse.
- An estimated 200.000 seniors over 65 are abused or neglected every year in the Netherlands.



- In 17% of the cases, elder abuse or negligence was the unintentional result of care given by informal caregivers to a family member or partner.
- These cases have increased in last years.

# **Elder abuse and negligence - Recognizing pressure on informal caregivers**

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## **Reasons for increase of unintentional abuse and negligence by informal caregivers:**

- More cutbacks in the Netherlands in care.
- Less care centers and long waiting lists.
- Less home care and professional support at home.

## **Older people depend more and more on partner and children for care.**

- 3,5 million Dutch people care for an older adult with care needs (1 in every 4 adults).
- 71% of informal caregivers combine care for the family and parents with their work.
- An average of 17 hours a week are spend on caring.
- More older adults with little capacity care by themselves for their partner.
- More than half of informal caregivers feel that they are under pressure and cannot cope.

# Elder abuse and negligence - Recognizing pressure on informal caregivers

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- Informal caregivers are for a long time under pressure
- People can become overloaded.
- Leads to situations of unintentional elder abuse.

**In these cases elder abuse or negligence is caused by pressure, frustration or lack of experience.**

- 1 in 3 informal caregivers of older adults with dementia indicate that they have passed the line in one or several occasions. Examples are:
  - too tired to help change clothes.
  - forget to give the right medication.
  - locked a person in in their room or tied up to their chair.

In the Netherlands we call this **derailed family care** .

Often not recognized on time, because it is a gradual process starting from the best intentions.





# Elder abuse and negligence - Recognizing pressure on informal caregivers

The NFE has started a campaign on derailed family care for seniors:

- Raise awareness on risks of caring under pressure.
- Promote reporting to the ElderlyOmbudsman.
- The ElderlyOmbudsman redirects to a confidential consultant to discuss the situation.
- Look for solutions together:
  - Find extra support from professionals (day care or home care)
  - Find help from other family members.
  - Arrange a care leave from work.
  - Support the victims of derailed family care.

People feel guilty and frustrated, often talking about this can already be a relief and help to prevent new occurrences.

# An introduction to the NFE - Bullying

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**NFE started a campaign on bullying among older people in care centers.**

Up to 40% of the older adults living in residential care has experienced bullying.

Examples are:

- Saving places for some residents and excluding others.
- Ignoring someone
- Blocking the way, making it difficult to pass by with a walker.
- Negative comments and glares.

Bullying occurs often in care centers because:

- changing group cohesions in a care center leading to insecurity
- more heterogeneity (people from different social classes or neighbourhoods in one center)
- boredom and dissatisfaction with living arrangements

**The NFE has designed a protocol to instruct professionals and design an anti-bullying method for residential care centers. For more information see:**

[http://www.ouderenfonds.nl/uploads/tekstblokken/bullying\\_in\\_residential\\_care](http://www.ouderenfonds.nl/uploads/tekstblokken/bullying_in_residential_care)

Thank you for your attention

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