

# *Elder Abuse and Neglect: Key Issues*

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*Serving the needs of older people*

# What is elder abuse?

Elder abuse is a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person.

– Action on Elder Abuse 1995,  
adopted by the International Network for the Prevention  
of Elder Abuse

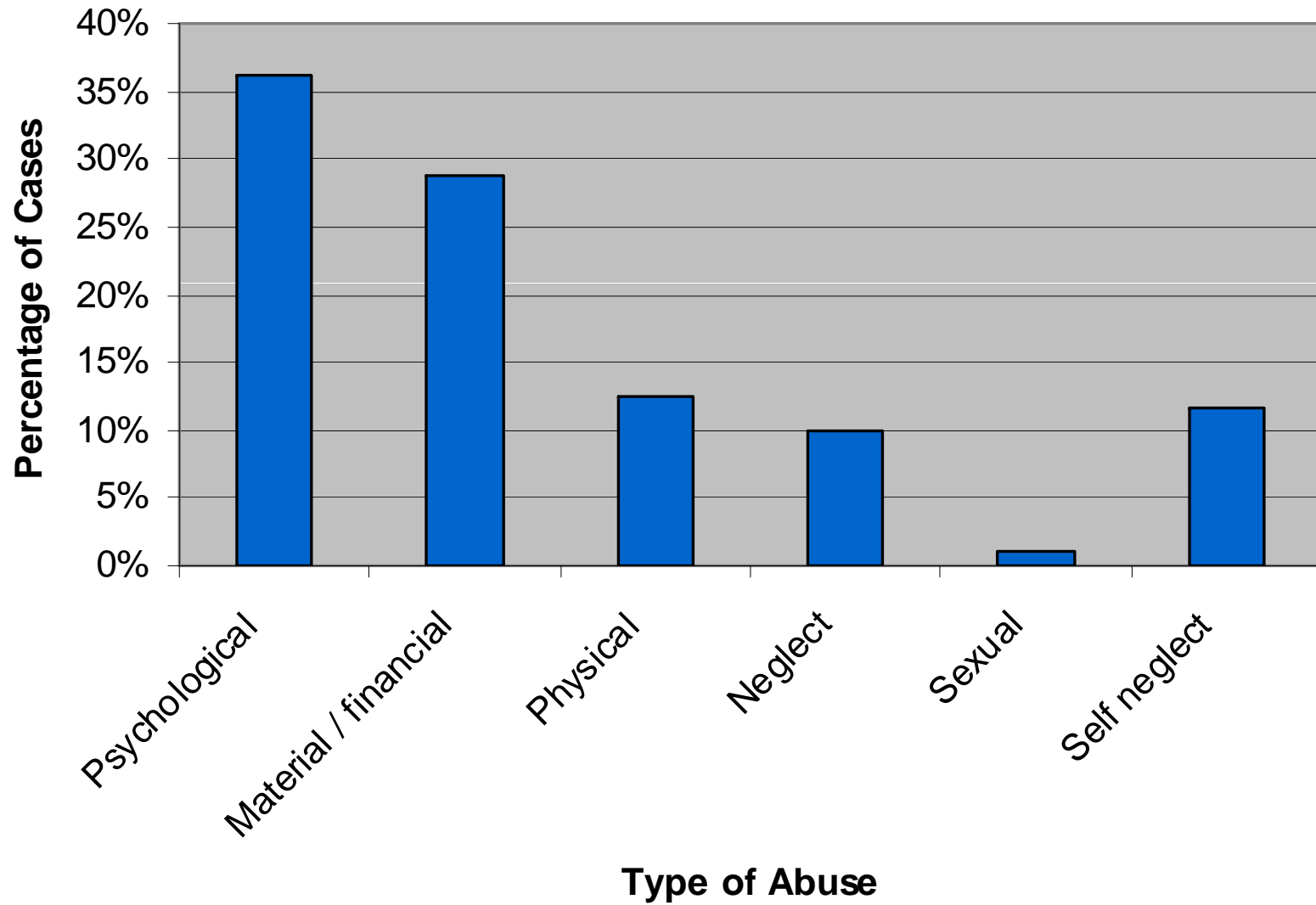


# Using the definition in practice

- Age
- Relationship of trust
- Range of experiences
- Impact on the older person



## Frequency of Types of Abuse Experienced by Age Concern Clients from 1998 to 2009



# Who is involved?

- 65% - 70% of abused are women
- 40% to 46% of clients live alone
- 70% to 80% of abuse is committed by family members
- 52% to 55% of abusers are male
- 40% to 50% of abusers are adult children
- Up to 35% of abuse is committed by the primary caregiver



Age Concern data from July 1998 to June 2008

# Impact on older people

- 57% felt emotionally distressed
- 51% general health significantly affected
- 50% life significantly disrupted
- 42% lost confidence and self esteem
- 40% independence significantly disrupted
- 24% likely to experience long-term consequences of abuse



Age Concern data 2004-2006, 944 cases

# Why does elder abuse occur?

- Carer Stress
- Relationship dynamics – power and control
- Social Isolation
- Ageist attitudes



# Issues that affect response to elder abuse and neglect

- Ageist attitudes
- Implementation of ageing in place
- Complexity of situations
- Gaps in support services
- Balancing duty of care and older people's rights



**Thank you**

**[www.ageconcern.org.nz](http://www.ageconcern.org.nz)**

