



Research on mistreatment of older adults in Quebec:

summaries of scientific articles



The IOA Screen: An Abuse-Alert Measure that Dispels Myths.

REFERENCE

Reis, M. (2000). The IOA Screen: an abuse-alert measure that dispels myths. *Generations*, 24(11) 13-16.

TEXT TYPE

Format: Scientific article

Content: Tool development

DISCUSSED THEMES

Definition, extent of the phenomenon forms of abuse, risk factors, vulnerability factors, profile of the abused person, abusers, detection, intervention, burden and stress.

GOAL OR RESEARCH QUESTION

From a preliminary list of 60 elements, to identify those which enable the detection of situations of abuse and those which do not contribute to screening.

PROBLEM

It is estimated that abuse affects approximately 3-5% of seniors and 13% of those who receive health services and social services. However, there are few valid screening tools and most of these tools are designed to be completed by the potential victim of elder abuse or by the caregiver, who can also be the perpetrator of abuse. This is why development and validation of a tool that can be completed by a professional were needed. The tool presented in this study is referred to as the IOA (Indicators of Abuse).

METHODOLOGY

As part of Project CARE, over a period of 3 years, 341 participants were involved in the validation of the IOA, within a health and social services agency in a large North American city. The participants had to be aged 55 or over and receive regular assistance from an unpaid caregiver. In each case, two or three interviews were conducted at home by a professional to assess the biological, psychological and social problems of the participants. From this information, the professionals completed the preliminary list of the IOA. None of the latter were told that this was done as part of a validation study of the tool.

RESULTS

From the preliminary list consisting of 60 items, 29 were predictive of the presence of an abusive situation. Together, these elements could predict abuse from 78% to 84.4% of the time. Cases showing no abuse were identified, for their part, 99.2% of the time. Abuse appears to be strongly linked to personal and emotional problems of the caregiver, his or her financial dependence on the elder, as well as to a lack of knowledge and understanding of the problems of the elder. In addition, cases of abuse were more frequent in the presence of family conflict, inadequate social support, as well as a history of abuse with regard to the senior. Some elements such as physical or emotional challenges of the older person, the need for assistance with daily activities as well as stress and pressure felt by the caregiver were not identified as indicators of abuse.

DISCUSSION

The discussion is integrated within the Results section above.

CONCLUSION

This study eliminates the diversion caused by problems common to both situations of abuse and situations where there is no abuse. This will help prevent misdirected interventions and their human and cost affiliated consequences. These results can be used to guide professionals by revealing the signs of abuse and specific problems requiring intervention. In addition, the study highlights the characteristics frequently found in situations of elder abuse, which can contribute to serve as a warning and indicate the need for investigation or intervention.

AVENUES FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

No avenues for practice or research are made explicit in this article. However, the IOA is presented, which can be used by practitioners to identify situations of abuse with their clientele.

DRAFTING DATE

October 02, 2014

