

WHEELING, WV, October 07, 2013 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- Disturbing allegations of elder abuse and neglect are raised all too often in West Virginia and across the country. An Internet news search on the topic will bring up articles about nursing home negligence lawsuits within the state. The problem was recently detailed in August 2013 testimony before a state legislative panel.

West Virginia legislative testimony

Fred Coffindaffer, a field consultant for the Bureau for Children and Families, an agency within the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, was cited in the Register-Herald Reporter for his recent testimony before the House of Delegate's Select Committee on PEIA, Seniors and Long Term Care.

According to the article, Coffindaffer shared these facts with the delegates:

- In 2012, the Bureau received 14,775 referrals of suspected elder abuse and neglect, leading to at least 6,000 agency investigations.- One-tenth of all such investigations on average turn out to be actual cases of elder abuse.- Annually, 200 to 300 cases uncover abuse and neglect serious enough to constitute criminal behavior.- The bureau investigates allegations of elder abuse and neglect anywhere in the state, including in nursing homes, day programs, private homes, assisted living facilities and more. - About one-sixth of West Virginia's population consisted of seniors 65 and older in 2012, and the proportion is projected to grow to about one-quarter of the population in 17 years.

Signs and symptoms

Abuse and neglect of nursing home residents happens in many ways, but some of the more common types and symptoms are:

- Infections.- Broken bones and head injuries from falls.- Improper restraints.- Malnutrition and dehydration.- Bedsores or pressure ulcers.- Financial abuse or theft.- Elopement or wandering away.- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse.- Failure to help with personal hygiene.- Failure to provide necessary medical treatment.- Inadequate monitoring. - Defective equipment.- Inadequate security.

West Virginia struggles with elder abuse

Written by Australian Business

The reasons for such treatment -- despite efforts to regulate the industry -- are numerous, but may result from understaffing, inadequate staff training or insufficient staff background checking.

Contact an experienced West Virginia elder abuse attorney

If you suspect that your loved one is being neglected or abused in a nursing home or other facility, or if he or she has died from that mistreatment, take action to contact social services and law enforcement, and seek immediate medical care for the victim, if appropriate.

A knowledgeable [elder abuse](#) lawyer can advise you about potential legal remedies like a personal injury or wrongful death lawsuit. It is important that your lawyer launch an investigation on your loved one's behalf to gather the evidence of improper care by interviewing staff and other witnesses, reviewing medical and facility records and surveillance tapes, and more.