

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Bismarck ND 58505**

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Elder abuse awareness event planned for Hazen on Aug. 11

BISMARCK, N.D. – Abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of older adults happens – even in North Dakota, where family bonds are strong and elders are respected. The West Central Vulnerable Adults Coalition is sponsoring an event in Hazen to remind people that if they see something, report it.

On August 11, coalition members are sponsoring an event at 1 p.m. at the Hazen Senior Center located at 21 Seventh St. N.W. The event will include presentations from the North Dakota Attorney General’s Office, the North Dakota Department of Human Services’ Vulnerable Adult Protective Services, and the North Dakota Securities Department on how people can protect themselves from abuse, scams, and financial exploitation.

In addition to featured speakers, information will be available on resources for seniors such as in-home services, legal services, and assistive technology. Cookies and coffee will be served, and participants will be able to register for door prizes.

The coalition created an informational pocket card with funding from AARP: “Abuse Hurts at Any Age...Recognize It, and Report It,” which is online at www.nd.gov/dhs/Info/pubs/docs/aging/elder-abuse-pocket-card.pdf.

The Department of Human Services received about 1,700 calls on possible abuse, neglect, and exploitation last year according to Elder Rights Program Administrator Michelle Gayette.

“We know abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults is under-reported,” Gayette said. “That is why it is important that people know how to recognize it and how to report it.”

People who suspect an older adult is being abused or neglected can report it by calling toll-free 1-855-462-5465 (1-855-GO2-LINK) – select option 2. More information is available on the department’s website at www.nd.gov/dhs/services/adultsaging/reporting.html.

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