
Neglect

Definition: Intentional or unintentional failure to fulfill a caregiver’s obligation or duty to an elderly person. “Self neglect” can also occur when an elderly person is unable or unwilling to make provision for proper care of him or herself.

Two Types of Neglect

1. **Active Neglect:** The intentional withholding of basic necessities and care.
 2. **Passive Neglect:** Not providing basic necessities and care because of the lack of experience, information, or ability.
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Fred’s Story

Though well in his eighties, Fred continued to live alone after his wife died. His daughter and son lived in the same town, but were busy with their own lives so Fred did not see them much. Because he was weak and frail, Fred found it hard to cook or do housework. Like the house, he gradually assumed a neglected appearance.

A friend of Fred’s noticed the changes in his appearance and behaviour. He suggested that the Seniors Resource Centre could assist Fred to find help.



Fred allowed his friend to call the Centre, and helpful people at the Centre contacted some community agencies that were able to assist. Soon Fred had the kind of help and support he needed to enable him to live in his home with a sense of well-being and comfort.

Signs of Neglect

- Malnutrition or dehydration
- Unkempt appearance; dirty or inadequate clothing
- Untreated medical conditions
- Unattended for long periods or having physical movements unduly restricted

Examples of Neglect

- Inadequate provision of food, clothing, or shelter
- Failure to attend to health and personal care responsibilities, such as washing, dressing, and bodily functions
- Failure to provide social companionship

For Assistance and Services – Regional Resources

Emergency shelters (for women of all ages)

- Iris Kirby House (St. John’s) 753-1492
- Shanawdithit Shelter (St. John’s – also takes men) 726-5970
- Cara House (Gander)..... 1-877-800-2272
- Transition House (Corner Brook).....
..... 1-866-634-4198
- Grace Sparks House (Marystown)
..... 1-877-774-4957
- Hope Haven (Labrador City).... 1-888-332-0000
- Libra House (HV-Goose Bay) ... 1-877-896-3014
- Nain Safe House (Nain) 1-866-922-1230
- Nukim Munik Shelter (Sheshatshiu).. 497-8869

(See back for more resources)

