



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

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Three Groups Receive Awards for Elder Abuse Prevention

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 2, 2017) – Three community groups have received awards for their work to stop elder abuse. The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), presented the awards at a recent conference focusing on elder abuse prevention.

Big Sandy Elder Abuse Council, the Kentucky River Council Against the Maltreatment of Elders (CAME) and the Purchase Elder Abuse Council each received Public Awareness Initiative awards of \$500. The awards recognize the groups for showing a commitment to elder abuse prevention through public outreach during the past 12 months.

DCBS Commissioner Adria Johnson said that these local efforts are making a difference for Kentucky's senior citizens.

"The work of these councils shows that we can all be a part of establishing well-being for the older members of our communities," she said. "Through partnership with our local offices and other agencies, the LCEEAs are making elder abuse a priority across their multi-county areas. I thank them for their programming that has helped save lives."

The three award winners are part of the state's network of 24 Local Coordinating Councils on Elder Abuse (LCCEAs), which covers 93 counties. The councils provide focused education to their communities to protect the elder population from abuse, neglect and financial exploitation.

The Big Sandy council operates in Floyd, Johnson, Martin, Magoffin and Pike counties. CAME is in Breathitt, Knott, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Owsley, Perry and Wolfe counties. The Purchase council is in Ballard, Calloway, Carlisle, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, McCracken and Marshall counties.

CHFS gives administrative support to the LCCEAs, which provide elder abuse education and outreach at the local and regional levels depending on the needs of the communities. Kentucky's network involves local law enforcement, county officials, advocates, nursing homes, local businesses, social service agencies and individuals. They share a common goal of ending abuse, neglect and exploitation of the elderly in their communities by offering specific advocacy, outreach and prevention strategies.

At the conference last month, attendees learned about senior bullying, mental health and aging and how neighbors can help ensure elder well-being.

Kentucky received more than 30,000 calls to report abuse, neglect and exploitation of people age 60 and older for state fiscal year 2016.

In Kentucky, reporting suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation is the law, and it's confidential. The toll-free reporting hotline is 1-877-KYSAFE1 (1-877-597-2331).

Kentuckians can help the fight against elder abuse by becoming involved with their LCCEAs. Membership is free and open to anyone interested in working to prevent elder abuse in his or her community.

To become involved with your community's LCCEA or to inquire about events, contact state LCCEA liaison Stacy Carey at 502-564-7043.

Get more information about the councils and recognizing the signs of elder abuse online at chfs.ky.gov/dcbs/dpp/eaal/.

Recognize the Signs of Elder Abuse

If you believe an elderly person is being abused, neglected or exploited, call 1-877-KYSAFE1 (1-877-597-2331), the state's abuse hotline. If you believe there is imminent risk, immediately call 911 or local law enforcement.

Learn to recognize the following signs of neglect and abuse.

Neglect

- Obvious malnutrition, dehydration
- Dirty and uncombed hair; dirty and torn or climate-inappropriate clothes; or offensive body odor
- Hoarding
- Lack of glasses, dentures or hearing aid, or lack of medical care
- Bedsores
- Recent suffering or loss of spouse, family members or close friends

Physical Abuse

- Frequent injuries such as bruises, burns, broken bones; explanation of the injury seems unrealistic
- Multiple bruises in various stages of healing, particularly bruises on inner arms or thighs
- Experiences pain when touched
- Loss of bowel and bladder control
- Never leaves the house or allows visitors
- Never mentions family or friends

Sexual Abuse

- Evidence of sexually transmitted disease
- Irritation or injuries to the mouth, genitals or anus
- Upset when changed or bathed
- Fearful of a particular person
- Loss of bowel and bladder control

Emotional/Psychological Abuse

- Isolated from family and friends
- Sudden dramatic change in behavior, appearing withdrawn, depressed, hesitant to talk openly
- Caregiver won't let victim speak for herself or himself
- Caregiver scolds, insults, threatens victim
- Trembling, clinging

Financial Abuse

- Unusual activity in bank account; sudden large withdrawals, expenditures that are not consistent with past financial history
- Use of automated teller machines (ATM) when the person has no history of using ATMs or cannot walk
- A recent will, when the person seems incapable of writing a will
- Rights signed away on legal papers without understanding what the papers mean
- Unpaid bills, such as house payment, rent, taxes or utilities

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The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services, the Department for Public Health, and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.