

# IOA

INDICATORS OF ABUSE



**NICE**

National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly

Initiative nationale pour le soin des personnes âgées

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## INDICATORS OF ABUSE (IOA)

### WHAT IS IOA?

The Indicators of Abuse (IOA) checklist signals mistreatment of seniors. The IOA (pronounced Iowa) also helps sensitize the practitioner to important abuse issues. The IOA is practical for busy practitioners and useful in training intervenors and volunteers in cases of abuse to recognize the signs of abuse. The IOA is a summary of abuse high-risk signals. It is not, however, a substitute for becoming knowledgeable about abuse signs through education.

### CAREGIVER AND CARE-RECEIVER INDICATORS OF ABUSE (IOA)

For Discriminating Abuse and Non-Abuse Cases

Indicators of abuse are listed on the next two panels, in order of importance\*. After a two-to three-hour home assessment (or other intensive assessment), rate each of the following items on a scale of 0 - 4 (as described in the sidebar). Do not omit any items. Rate according to your current opinion.

*\* The majority of the most important indicators are the caregiver ones.*

## **INDICATORS OF ABUSE (IOA)**

### **SCORING THE IOA**

Total the sum of ratings for all items (range: 0 - 108).

### **INTERPRETING THE RESULTS**

The abuse indicators are listed in rough order of importance. In general, the caregiver indicators carry more weight than care-receiver indicators. However, it is the total list of indicators together that signal abuse. Thus, the higher the total score (0 - 108), the more likely it is that abuse is occurring. Total scores close to 16 and higher are suggestive of abuse. Total scores of 4 or less indicate that there probably is no abuse.

Each indicator that is rated by the interviewer as being between 1 and 4 on the scale should be explored clinically. However, each individual indicator does not, by itself, indicate abuse.

## CAREGIVER

- \_\_\_\_\_ Has behaviour problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is financially dependent
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has mental/emotional difficulties
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has alcohol/substance abuse problem
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has unrealistic expectations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lacks understanding of medical condition
- \_\_\_\_\_ Caregiving reluctance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has marital/family conflict
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has poor current relationship
- \_\_\_\_\_ Caregiving inexperience
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is a blamer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Had poor past relationship

## CARE-RECEIVER

- \_\_\_\_\_ Has been abused in the past
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has marital/family conflict
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lacks understanding of medical condition
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is socially isolated
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lacks social support
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has behaviour problems

## CARE-RECEIVER (cont.)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Is financially dependent
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has unrealistic expectations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has alcohol/medication problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has poor current relationship
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has suspicious falls/injuries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has mental/emotional difficulties
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is a blamer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is emotionally dependent
- \_\_\_\_\_ No regular doctor

## SCALE

Estimated extent of problem:

- |   |                   |     |                  |
|---|-------------------|-----|------------------|
| 0 | = non-existent    | 4   | = yes/severe     |
| 1 | = slight          | oo  | = not applicable |
| 2 | = moderate        | ooo | = don't know     |
| 3 | = probably/severe |     |                  |

Caregiver Age \_\_\_\_\_ years

Caregiver and Care-Receiver Kinship

- \_\_\_\_\_ spouse/partner
- \_\_\_\_\_ non-spouse/non-partner

Extracted from Myrna Reis and Daphne Nahmiash, *When Seniors Are Abused* (Toronto: Captus Press, 1995, pp. 15-26).  
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This is one in a series of tools for detecting, intervening and/or preventing abuse of seniors. For more information about this, any of the other NICE tools or related training events, please visit [www.nicenet.ca](http://www.nicenet.ca)

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