

Number of elderly who are abused soars 28% - but a third of culprits never face justice

- **Almost 300 suspected cases reported every day last year**
- **Includes neglect, physical attacks and mental cruelty**
- **More than a third of abusers are care workers**
- **Changes to Care Bill demanded to bring perpetrators to justice**

By [Daniel Martin](#)

The number of elderly people being abused has soared by more than a quarter in a year – and a third of the perpetrators never face justice.

Almost 300 suspected cases were reported to local authorities every day last year, making a total of 105,000 – a huge 28 per cent increase on the 82,000 from 2011.

More than a quarter of the cases involved someone aged at least 85.



A total of 105,000 cases were reported last year and a quarter of them involved a victim aged 85 or over

Much of the abuse is carried out by home helps and staff in care homes – the very people entrusted to look after the elderly.

It includes neglect, physical attacks, mental cruelty and financial manipulation. But the reported cases are believed to represent just the tip of the iceberg because experts say far more take place but are never discovered.

More than a third of suspected abusers are care workers, and almost a half of the cases took place in residential care homes.

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Last night a charity demanded a change to the Care Bill, which is going through Parliament, to ensure that those guilty of abuse are brought to justice.

Age UK, who collated the figures, said it wants to see a new crime of 'corporate neglect' to punish care home or care agency managers who allow a culture of abuse and neglect.

The latest figures show more than a quarter of cases reported to local authorities related to suspicions of physical abuse, and more than a third to neglect.

In addition, just over 18 per cent were concerned with financial abuse, such as people taking advantage of the elderly to get access to bank accounts, 13 per cent were to do with emotional or physical abuse, and 2.4 per cent highlighted sexual abuse.



Around half of all abuse was believed to have happened in residential care homes and a third was carried out by staff (file pic)

Caroline Abrahams, of Age UK, said: 'These numbers are disturbing. Even though growing awareness of the abuse of older people is likely to have contributed to the increase in the number of safeguarding concerns reported, they concern some of the most vulnerable people in our society, many of whom feel that they have no one to turn to for help.'

'Any abuse of older people is unacceptable and we need a zero-tolerance approach to any abuse whether through neglect, financial manipulation or physical or mental cruelty.'

'Our biggest fear is that there are still many cases that are not reported and we would encourage anyone who suspects an older person is being abused to contact their social services or the police straight away.'

The increase in reported abuse cases comes amid concerns that standards in care homes are deteriorating and that the elderly are being put at risk of neglect because home helps often only visit for 15 minutes, giving them insufficient time to assist with washing, dressing, heating up meals and going to the toilet that an older person may need.

The Mail's long-running Dignity For The Elderly campaign has highlighted poor services and care for older people.

This summer, we revealed that a record 910 care homes were issued with official warnings after the health watchdog uncovered 'unacceptable' standards of care for the most vulnerable.

Warning notices from the Care Quality Commission are issued when the standard of care breaks the law. Unless they make improvements, they face closure and prosecution.