



# Adult Protective Services

Statistics and Annual Update

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December 14, 2015

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## **Program Scope**

Contra Costa County Adult Protective Services (APS) is designed to investigate and mitigate abuse, neglect or exploitation of elder adults (65 years and older) and dependent adults (18-64 who are disabled), when these adults are unable to meet their own needs. These services are provided to any person meeting the program criteria who resides in the community (not in licensed long term care facilities, state hospital or state developmental center). The program is primarily considered an emergency response program, however, APS services are also considered preventive in nature and part of a continuum of services offered by the department. An effective APS program reduces the need for services in higher cost emergency health care interventions, public guardian, public administrator and law enforcement costs.

APS staff also provides information and referral to other agencies and educates the public about reporting requirements and responsibilities under the Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Reporting Laws. APS further partners with these agencies to develop a comprehensive response to abuse and neglect.

APS attempts to create a stable environment where the individual can safely function without requiring additional intervention from the adult protective services program. The goal of the program is to provide such support in the community and in the clients own home. Adult protective services include:

- Response to reports of known or suspected abuse or neglect.
- Investigations.
- Time-limited case management and arrangement for delivery of services.
- Emergency shelter/in-home protection.
- Tangible resources.
- Multidisciplinary team.

## **Current Staffing**

Staffing for the APS program continues to be below the levels established in 2008 prior to the economic downturn and staff reductions in Contra Costa County. As a result, the program continues to struggle with providing critical services to the target population and, in fact, remains out of compliance with some state mandates of the program (see Challenges below). The current staffing include the following:

- 1 Division Manager
- 1 Senior Staff Assistant
- 1 Secretary
- 2 APS Supervisors
- 2 Clerks
- 13 APS Social workers.

## **Program Strengths**

The APS program has a long history in Contra Costa County and has been a model of service in the past. The program staff is committed to growing and rebuilding the program in a way that better meets the needs of the vulnerable seniors and disabled adults served. The team is actively engaging in a plan of correction. The program continues to receive reports from key community partners in the protection of elders including law enforcement, banking institutions, health care providers and community based programs such as senior centers. These partners are anxious to strengthen those relationships for improved outcomes.

### **Challenges**

Staffing levels, longstanding vacancies in key leadership positions and increased demand for services have created an environment where the APS program is unable to meet the basic mandated requirements of the program. The department has been successful in slowly building staffing levels back to the 2008 levels, but changes in the program demands dictate that this will not be sufficient. The population in Contra Costa County has grown 5.9% between 2010 and 2014.

APS cannot currently take very many live calls on the APS hotline. While the hotline is the first point of contact with the program, the phone lines are staffed by two clerks who take a message and pass it on to two trained social workers who then attempt to reach the reporting party. This system does not allow for a trained social worker to provide an immediate response to a crisis situation, since reporters are often busy health care, law enforcement and other professionals, which may not be immediately available to wait for a call back. The result is a loss of potential reports.

### **Performance Data**

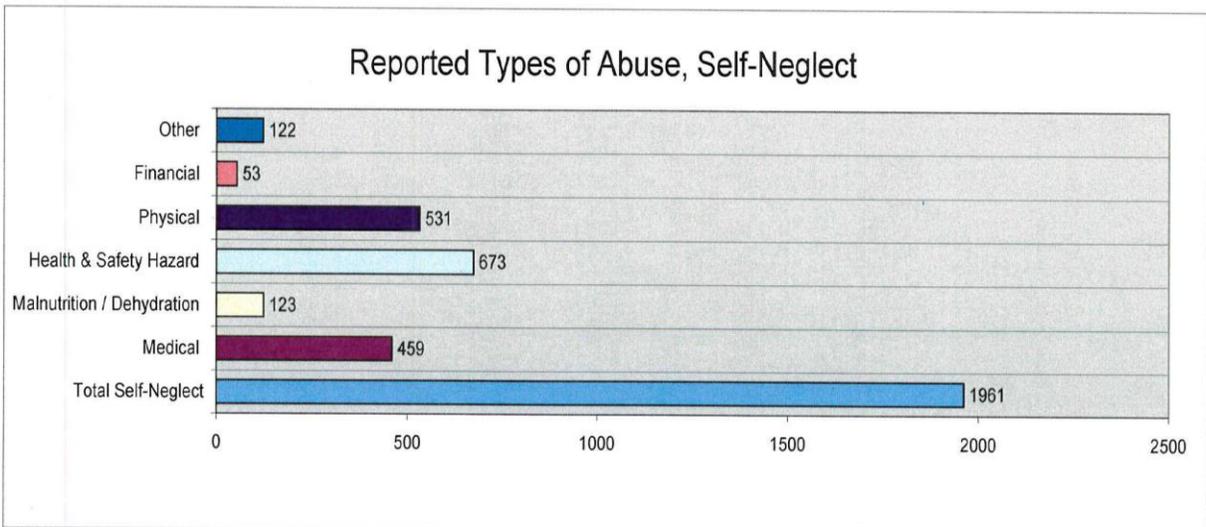
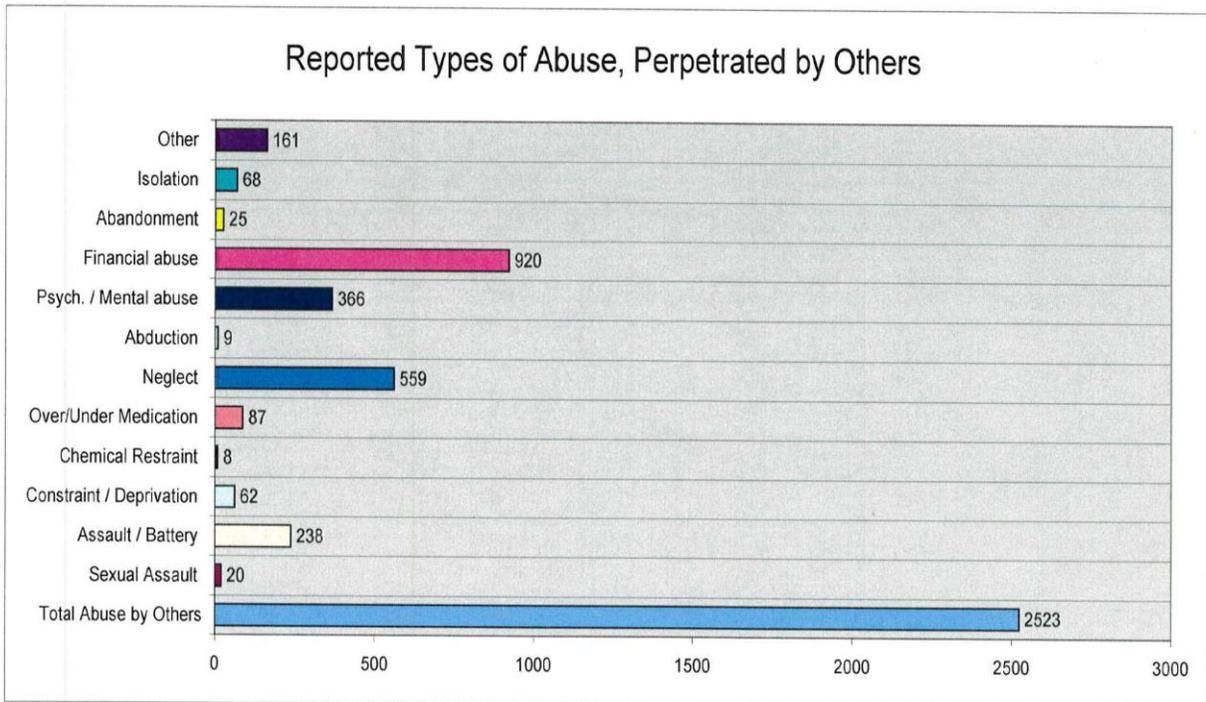
The need for Adult Protective Services continues to grow with the growing population in the county. As families, friends, neighbors and caregivers are better educated to recognize the signs of abuse, even more reports are coming into the department. All reports should be investigated by APS.

The overall number of abuse reports has risen from 3,115 in FY 13/14 to 4,484 in FY 14/15. This represents a 30% increase in the number of APS calls. In light of the slow staff growth, there is an alarming trend toward screening only the highest risk calls thereby reducing the programs ability to provide preventative support.

Below are the Intake Summary Reports and the Case Closure Statistics for the program. These charts represent program activity in regards to client flow and illustrate the high demand for and the complexity of the APS case.

Of the 4,484 reports that were received by the department, a face to face assessment was conducted on 1,639 cases, approximately 25%. The reasons for this include unfounded reports, client not consenting to services, placement in long term care facilities and inability of the limited staff answering the hotline calls to respond live to callers and establish full reports.

## Intake Summary Report



## Closure Statistics

## Cases Where a Face to Face was Completed

Total Number of Cases Closed After Face to Face	1,626
Reason for Closure	CASES
Protection issue resolved and client safe	365
Risk of abuse was reduced	527
Receiving intervention from another agency/resource	109
Client was placed in a long term care facility	77
Client does not consent to services	250
Client requested case closure	20
Client is deceased	37
Client moved out of jurisdiction	20
Allegations unfounded, no protective issue	121
Client does not meet criteria for APS	4
Other	96

### Future Plans

APS is a short-term emergency response program, designed to provide a rapid and comprehensive response to the critical needs of elders and disabled adults. Partnerships with key community partners are critical. Over two thirds of all APS cases are open for less than 2 months, during which time the staff work intensively to reduce risk, stabilize and connect families to necessary resources. In order to meet that demand the program must continue to evolve and grow.

- Increase APS Social Work Staffing to rebuild the Division to meet the current demand for service.
- Create an integrated call center for calls to Adult Protection, In Home Support Services and Information and Assistance to better coordinate services to those callers who require the assistance of other community based programs to prevent the escalation of a low level concern to a crisis.
- Re-establish the Multi-disciplinary Team and the Financial Abuse Services Team meetings with community partners to better coordinate integrated service plans for complex cases of abuse and neglect and create a Senior Staff Assistant position to facilitate and coordinate the two teams
- To better equip our staff to respond to the complex needs of this population, created in partnership with all Aging Divisions, a Staff Development Trainer dedicated to producing and

supporting county based induction and ongoing training related to aging services.

- Create a Tangible Services fund to meet the immediate needs of program clients by providing one time support for critical needs such as emergency repairs, transportation, food, shelter or utility shut offs.
- To improve data tracking and reporting in order to create performance management reports to be used for informed decision making and to improve program outcomes.

The unfortunate specter of elder abuse is not declining. In fact, legislative proposals are moving toward the need for greater, not less intervention on the part of APS. As the population grows, so does the need for protection. Financial abuse schemes are becoming more sophisticated, neglect and self-neglect are prevalent and the physical abuse or injury can be the result of violence or poor training on the part of a caregiver. The complex dynamics facing families are impacting these vulnerable adults as well. Contra Costa County has the history of providing model services in adult protection and the department is striving to become a model of service once again.