What are acts of neglect and abandonment of elders?

- **Neglect**
  - Neglect is a severe or persistent lack of attention to an elder's basic needs (such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical treatment, nursing care) that endangers or impairs the elder's health or safety.
  - Neglect also includes the lack of provision of medicine and auxiliary equipment according to medical advice, which causes physical harm to the elder.
  - If a formal service provider (e.g., Residential Care Homes for the Elderly, Integrated Home Care Services Teams, hospitals) fails to perform its caring responsibility and causes harm to the elder, the case can also be considered as neglect.

- **Abandonment**
  - Abandonment is the act of abandoning an elder without justifiable reasons committed by a carer or guardian, which endangers or impairs the elder physically or psychologically. For example, a family member gives a wrong residential address to the hospital upon admission of the elder and makes it impossible for the hospital to contact him/her to discuss the medical and welfare issues of the elder.

What are the indicators of an elder being neglected or abandoned?

The following signs are shown on the part of the elder:

- **Neglect**
  - Serious loss of weight/severely underweight; dehydration or malnutrition
  - Suffering from persistent bed sores
  - Lacking of necessary medication
  - Being dirty frequently
  - Wandering around alone frequently or for a prolonged period of time

- **Abandonment**
  - Staying alone on streets, in parks or malls for a prolonged period
  - Being dirty frequently

The behaviours or signs listed above are not necessarily evidence of elder abuse. However, if these indicators appear, we should be alerted and pay more attention to the elders. Where necessary, assistance of professionals (e.g., social workers, medical personnel) should be sought as soon as possible.

What kind of support is available for carers of elders?

- Assistance should be sought if a carer is under great pressure or does not possess the skills of caring or health care knowledge.
- Carer support service is provided in District Elderly Community Centres, Neighbourhood Elderly Centres, Day Care Centres/Units for the Elderly, the Integrated Home Care Services Teams and the Enhanced Home and Community Care Services Teams. Through the provision of information, resources and training for carers, it helps raise the carers' ability in taking care of the elders and ease their pressure, also with an aim of preventing the problem of elder abuse.
- Government-subsidized Residential Care Homes for the Elderly and Day Care Centres for the Elderly also offer respite services for the elders, providing short-term residential or day care services to elders in need, so that their carers may get some rest.
- Frail elders with care needs and whose family members are unable to take care of them may apply for long term care services through Family Service Centres/Integrated Family Service Centres, Medical Social Services Units and various elderly services units.
- Arrangements will be made for elder applicants to undergo a standardized care need assessment to ascertain their impairment level and service need, after which they will then be waitlisted for and allocated to the required services according to the assessment results.
- If there is a change of temperament for the elder, becoming short-tempered and suspicious, his/her family members should bring the elder to consult a doctor as soon as possible. The change is possibly an initial symptom of dementia rather than an intentional act to pick on his/her family. If family members can accept the difficulty of the elder, arrange the necessary medical care for him/her and change the ways they get along with the elders, the pressure of taking care of the elders could be relieved.

How to seek assistance?

- Persons in need of assistance may approach District Elderly Community Centres, Family Services Centres/Integrated Family Service Centres and in respective districts. Telephone numbers for enquiries and addresses of these centres are available on the Social Welfare Department website at http://www.info.gov.hk/swd.
- If the abused elder is receiving other social services, he/she may seek assistance from the social workers of the service unit concerned, who may arrange referrals where necessary.
- Social Welfare Department Hotline: 2343 2255
- Caritas Family Crisis Support Centre Hotline: 18288

November 2004
何謂疏忽照顧及遠棄長者？

- 疏忽照顧
  - 疏忽照顧是指嚴重或長期過度長者生活上的基本需求（例如沒有為長者提供足夠的飲食、衣著、居住、醫療、護理等）以致危害長者的健康或生命安全。
  - 疏忽照顧亦包括沒有根據醫護的指示給予長者其所需的藥物或輔助器具，使長者身體受到損害。
- 遠棄
  - 長期單獨留在家中，甚至棄置於醫院或療養機構。
  - 長期單獨留在家中，甚至棄置於治療機構。

以上所列之行為或跡象，非一定是虐待長者的證據，但當這些表徵出現時，應審慎評估。

如何求助？

- 若確診長者有疏忽照顧或遠棄之情形，可向相關部門求助。
- 若確診長者有疏忽照顧或遠棄之情形，可向相關部門求助。
- 若確診長者有疏忽照顧或遠棄之情形，可向相關部門求助。

長者出現下列情況時，應尋求幫助：

- 欠缺所需的藥物治療
- 經常挨餓
- 經常處於急難或無人陪伴之下有處置
- 遠棄
  - 長期單獨留在家中，甚至棄置於醫院或療養機構等
  - 長期單獨留在家中，甚至棄置於治療機構等

在照顧長者方面可以有甚麼支撐？

- 如果照顧者感到壓力太大，可以尋求專業人士或部門的幫助。
- 長者地區中心、長者社區服務中心、長者日間護理中心、長者社區照顧服務隊，為有需要的長者提供支援服務，包括提供資源、資訊和訓練等。
- 提供資源、資訊和訓練等。
- 與長者及社區照顧服務員合作，提供短期照顧及康復服務，以延緩長者失能的進展。
- 與長者及社區照顧服務員合作，提供短期照顧及康復服務，以延緩長者失能的進展。
- 與長者及社區照顧服務員合作，提供短期照顧及康復服務，以延緩長者失能的進展。