

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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Bismarck's West Central Human Service Center receives grant to help prevent elder abuse

BISMARCK, N.D. - The North Dakota Department of Human Services' West Central Human Service Center in Bismarck has been awarded a \$10,000 federal grant to develop an Elder Abuse Prevention Coalition within its 10-county service region. Once developed, the coalition will involve Burleigh, Emmons, Grant, Kidder, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Oliver, Sheridan, and Sioux counties.

North Dakota is one of 10 awardees nationwide to receive the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) grant to participate in the Elder Justice Community Collaborations project.

"It is an honor to be selected. This is an exciting opportunity to expand coordination with community partners who share our interest in serving vulnerable adults in the region," said Cherry Schmidt, the Regional Aging Services Program Administrator at West Central Human Service Center, who is involved in the grant.

Schmidt said the human service center's Vulnerable Adult Protective Services Program responds to about 100 reports annually of suspected self-neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, or financial exploitation of vulnerable adults.

Providing adult protective services typically requires cooperation between department staff and law enforcement, county social services, senior service providers, the courts, financial institutions, churches, and other entities and alert individuals.

"We value the role our partners have in identifying and responding to possible concerns, and we welcome this chance to strengthen our collaborative efforts and enhance our response," Schmidt said.

Funding will support coalition training meetings and will defray costs coalition members may incur attending the NCEA training.

For information about the coalition, contact Schmidt at 701-328-8787 or cschmidt@nd.gov.

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