Elder Abuse Ontario
Stop Abuse - Restore Respect

PSW Quick Reference Guide to Elder Abuse Identification

1. What is Elder Abuse?

Any action or lack of action, by a person in a position of trust (family, friend, caregiver) that harms the well being of an older person.

2. What do I do? "RIR"

Recognize signs

- **Physical Abuse**: hitting, pinching, slapping, confining or restraining, unusual pattern of injuries, unexplained injuries
- **Sexual Abuse**: unwanted sexual activity and/or contact, making sexual comments, forcing a person to perform a sexual act
- **Emotional/Verbal Abuse**: words or actions that are hurtful and make someone feel unworthy, not respecting older person's wishes, pets or belongings, denying access to grandchildren or friends, threats
- **Financial Abuse**: misusing older person's property or funds, theft, forgery, fraud, improper use of Power of Attorney for finances
- **Neglect**: withholding care or basic necessities of life, leaving person in unsafe conditions, not purchasing mobility devices, glasses, dentures, over or under medicating

Intervene

- Ensure immediate safety
- Active listening and reassurance that it is not their fault and they are not alone
- Ask what they want to do and let them know help is available

Respond

- Report to supervisor, debrief with team, follow up as required

3. How do I ask the questions?

- How is everything at home?
- Do you feel safe? Is there something you'd like to share with me?
- Has there been a recent incidence causing you concern? Tell me about it.
- Has anyone ever tried to take advantage of you? Tell me about it.
- Has anyone ever failed to help you take care of yourself when you needed help?
- Do you make decisions for yourself or does someone else make them for you? How do you feel about that?
- I noticed you were having difficulty with dressing/eating/ meds… Are you left alone a lot?
- I noticed yesterday that your son/daughter/friend seemed very angry with you? Does he often act like that? How does that make you feel?

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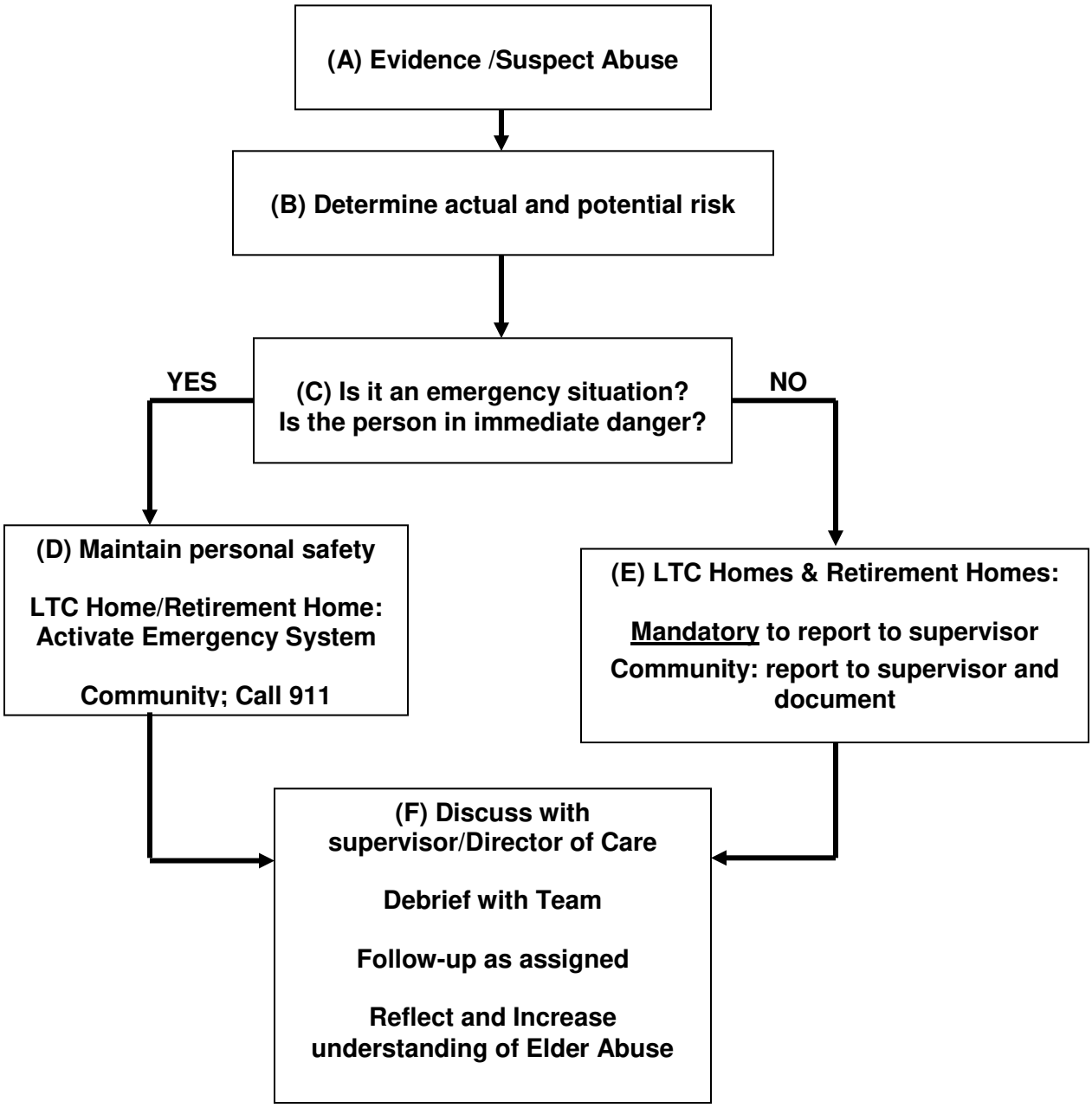
Decision Tree A – PSW's and Volunteers



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