Sexual violence against people later in life is defined as sexual offenses that are perpetrated against those at the age of 60 or older. While sexual abuse is the least common type of elder abuse, it is important to acknowledge that this type of violence is chronically underreported and under-identified. Victims of elder sexual assault can sustain physical and emotional injuries just like the younger victims. These include anxiety, depression, sexually transmitted diseases, pelvic injuries, and more. Sexual assault in the Later in Life community can have a negative impact and could result in the decline of their psychological and physical functioning and overall wellbeing.

- Most survivors have a personal relationship with the perpetrator.
- Sexual assault can be perpetrated against those with a mental illness (or dementia) that could cause an older person to be unable to communicate their consent for sexual contact.
- Women are 6x more likely to be the victims of sexual assault later in life, but underreporting within the male population is common.
- Common perpetrators of elder sexual assault include friends, live-in nursing aids, nursing home assistants, family members and other types of care providers that are left alone to care for the elderly individual.
- Survivors can experience adverse effects including health problems, cognitive impairments, and negative emotional symptoms.
- Similar to child abusers, offenders who target elderly victims often prey on the vulnerability of the population.
- Acknowledging discrepancies in the research, existing studies estimated that between 2-8% of older adults had experienced sexual violence within the previous year, with lifetime prevalence rates ranging up to 17%.
- Many victims later in life are unaware of the support services that exist for them.
- Only about 30% of elderly victims of sexual abuse over the age of 65 years report the abuse to the authorities.
- About 83% of victims of elder sexual abuse reside in an institutional care center, such as a nursing home.
- About 27% of victims of elder sexual abuse occurred in either the elder’s own home or in the perpetrators’ home.
- About 80% of the time, perpetrator of elder sexual abuse was the caregiver to the elder.
- About 76% of elder sexual abuse victims have had their incident witnessed by another.
- About 67% of elder sexual abusers were members of the family, according to the National Elder Abuse Incidence Study.