



SOCIAL SERVICES NEWS

P.O. BOX 669 Newton, North Carolina 28658-0669 (828) 695-5600 www.catawbacountync.gov/dss

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Margaret Allen, Catawba County Social Services Public Information Officer,
mallen@catawbacountync.gov, 828-695-6583

SENIOR HEALTH AWARENESS FAIR PLANNED

HICKORY -- Free health screenings and information about elder abuse will be available at the Senior Health Awareness Fair to be held from 8 a.m. to noon on June 23 at Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG), located at 1880 Second Ave. NW, Hickory.

This event is sponsored by Adult Protective Services of Catawba County Social Services and the WPCOG - Area Agency on Aging in honor of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Adult Protective Services will be providing information on the issue of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

In addition, Frye Regional Medical Center will offer several free medical screenings, including peripheral vascular screening, diabetic foot inspection, balance and falls risk assessment, and stroke risk assessment.

Those wishing to participate are encouraged to register by calling 1-855-200-FRYE. Registration is requested but not required.

Catawba County Social Services investigates cases of adult abuse, neglect or exploitation in Catawba County. Many cases involve elderly persons, although the law in North Carolina also covers any adult with a disability. Self-neglect is one of the most commonly reported problems. The law only covers instances in which the person is disabled and unable to care for themselves.

According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, elder abuse refers to intentional or neglectful acts by a caregiver or trusted individual that lead to, or may lead to, harm of a vulnerable elder. This may include physical abuse, neglect, emotional or psychological abuse, financial abuse and exploitation, sexual abuse and abandonment.

If you know of a disabled adult whom you suspect is being abused or neglected, please call 828-695-5609 during business hours. You may report after hours by calling 911. In North Carolina, the law requires anyone who suspects adult abuse to report it. Your identity will be kept confidential. You do not have to give your name, although it is helpful to provide as much information as possible. You should provide the following information: name of the disabled adult, age and address of the disabled adult, name and address of caretaker (if applicable), nature of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation, and other pertinent information.

You may also make a report by mail by sending a letter to Catawba County Department of Social Services, P.O. Box 669, Newton, NC 28658. Or you may report in person by coming to the Social Services office at 3030 11th Ave. Dr. SE, Hickory.

Other ways that concerned persons may help include visiting an elderly loved one and asking how she or he is doing, providing a respite break for a caregiver, or becoming involved in activities to bring attention to this issue.

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