



Phone Scams and the Elderly

In a recent email to her care manager colleagues, Peggy Treland, RN, one of our care managers, wrote: "wanted to give everyone a heads up re a probable swindle attempt of the elderly. Recently a client of mine got a high pressure phone call from a stranger claiming to be her grandson in need of \$1900 ASAP as he is in jail and needs to be bailed out-apparently, another person is involved in this scenario claiming to be the grandson's attorney and wanting the client to send the money ASAP. She also got calls from someone claiming to be from Medicare requesting personal information. She did not fall prey to these scams, but the callers are very convincing."

We sent this on to the Better Business Bureau (BBB) and Randall Hoth, the Executive Director, responded:

"This is the common grandparents scam and I am frustrated with how we can get the media to cover this terrible problem".

Peggy's client had already been placed on the "no call" list – so what else can be done to protect an elderly person from this type of scam? One way is to alert families to these types of scams and suggest that they listen carefully if an older relative tells them about a suspicious telephone call, asks them to help transfer money to someone they do not know, or recounts a complicated story about someone in need that is hard to check out. Monitoring bank accounts online can be very helpful also – so long as the passwords and security codes are kept secure.

If you have any questions about scams call the BBB at 414 847-6000, see their website for a story about this exact scam: <http://wisconsin.bbb.org/article/elderly-couple-loses-19K-in-telephone-scam-15084>. Their advice: "emergency phone calls from loved ones be confirmed by additional family members before any financial transactions are made. Consumers should also recognize any request to send money to a foreign country through a wire transfer company, such as Western Union or MoneyGram, as an immediate sign that the request may be a scam. Funds sent via wire transfer are difficult to track once received by scammers, and are usually not recoverable by law enforcement or banking officials."

For anyone victimized by this type of "Emergency Scam," the BBB recommends reporting the incident immediately to local police departments and Attorneys General offices. They also advise that, in the case of a request to wire money to Canada, the fraud should be reported to the CAFC by calling PhoneBusters' toll-free hotline (1-888-495-8501) or filing a complaint on its website: www.phonebusters.com).

How a Care Manager Can Help

A care manager can help to avoid a potentially costly mistake. If your family or one of your clients need help from a skilled professional call **Jill Hyatt at 414 963-2600** to arrange for an in-person meeting with one of our care managers. Our care managers have been trained as nurses or social workers, have worked with hundreds of families, and can provide valuable insight and help solve many different types of problems.

**414.963.2600 www.elderselectstaff.com
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Since 1983 improving the quality of the day to day lives of our clients and their families in ways both small and large. Nationally Accredited by the Council on Accreditation since 2000. Recipient of Wisconsin Better Business Bureau 2004 Ethics in Business Award.

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