

The Debate Arguments for and against Mandatory Reporting¹

In Favour of MR	Against MR
Reporting protects adults at risk and prevents deaths.	Mandatory Reporting does more harm than good and may result in further abuse.
Mandatory Reporting facilitates early notification and this leads to successful intervention.	Mandatory Reporting intrudes on the sanctity of the family, and individual choice.
Mandatory Reporting is essential because it recognizes and protects the overall rights of the adult.	Mandatory Reporting simply overloads the System.
Mandatory Reporting leads to increased reporting to Authorities.	There are such significant difficulties in operationalizing Mandatory Reporting (the who, when, and how), that it is generally unenforceable and unsuccessful in its intentions to reduce harm.
Mandatory Reporting will provide a standardized and uniform data base on protection.	Mandatory Reporting does not mean mandatory (adequate, effective) resources to respond. It is also reactive rather than proactive and it works counter to contemporary understanding of the need to develop healthy and trusting communities that care for older adults.
Mandatory Reporting educates the population about the appropriate processes for reporting abuse.	Mandatory Reporting inhibits self disclosure of concern and maltreatment.
Mandatory Reporting demonstrates that government is sending a clear message that abuse of older/vulnerable adults won't be tolerated.	Mandatory Reporting reinforces stereotypes. It also discriminates against vulnerable populations, in that reports are more commonly made about some parts of the adult population.
Mandatory Reporting is the only way that the legal (privacy) and ethical (confidentiality) obstacles to reporting can be addressed without compromising the integrity of professionals.	Once Mandatory Reporting is introduced, it is not possible to remove it.

¹ Prepared by Charmaine Spencer, February, 2016, "Synthesis of research." BCARCN Webinar. "Mandatory reporting of mistreatment of adults : effective panacea or feel good placebo?"