



## Tool 1.4: Physical abuse: behaviours and signs

**Physical abuse** involves the infliction of physical pain or injury, or physical coercion.<sup>6</sup>

### Behaviours

- Pushing, shoving or rough-handling.
- Kicking, hitting, punching, slapping, biting, or burning.
- Restraining: physically or medically.
- Locking the person in a room or home.
- Intentional injury with a weapon or object.
- Overuse or misuse of medications.

### Signs

- Internal or external injuries (sprains; dislocations and fractures; pressure sores; unexplained bruises or marks on the body; pain on touching or injuries at different stages of healing).
- Broken or healing bones.
- Lacerations to mouth, lips, gums, eyes or ears.
- Missing teeth and eye injuries.
- Evidence of hitting, punching, shaking or pulling (e.g. bruises, lacerations, choke marks, hair loss or welts).
- Burns (e.g. rope, cigarettes, matches, iron, or hot water).
- Discrepancies between an injury and the explanation of how it happened.

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### George's story

George is a 78-year-old gentleman. While undergoing rehabilitation for a knee replacement, he has resided with his son, Ken and Ken's family.

George has bruising on his arms and says that Ken gets angry and has grabbed him but doesn't mean anything by it.

*Behaviours – George disclosed that Ken gets angry and has grabbed him.*

*Signs – Evidence of bruising on George's arms.*

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