

INSIGHTS FROM THE ALRC'S ELDER ABUSE INQUIRY

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"It's Time To Get SERIOUS!"

SAY NO TO ABUSE ON
WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

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Australian Government
Australian Law Reform Commission

What is elder abuse?

‘a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person’

World Health Organization, *The Toronto Declaration on the Global Prevention of Elder Abuse* (2002).



What is elder abuse?

- Commonest kind = financial abuse ~40%
- Commonest abusers = children in their 50s

Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS),
*Elder Abuse: Understanding Issues, Frameworks
and Responses* (2016)



But, carers are important

2015:

- 2.7 million unpaid carers
- Average age = 55yrs

2009, for people aged 65+ needing care:

- 24% of primary carers = adult sons or daughters living with parent



The recommendations



National Plan

Goals:

- promoting the autonomy and agency of older people
- addressing ageism and promoting community understanding of elder abuse
- achieving national consistency



Aged care

- Establishing a serious incident response scheme
- Suitability of staff
- Regulating restrictive practices
- National guidelines for community visitors



Enduring appointments

Safeguards against misuse include:

- choice as to scope
- support will, preferences and rights
- enhance witnessing



Family agreements

- Tribunals to provide forum for dispute resolution
- Agreements should be in writing



Safeguarding adults at risk

- Introduce adult safeguarding laws for those who:
 - need care and support
 - are being abused or neglected or at risk
 - cannot protect themselves



Finding and following ALRC work

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