



Australian Government

# EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

A large graphic of stylized human figures in various colors (purple, blue, teal, pink) arranged in a line, with some overlapping. The figures are simple, rounded shapes representing people.

## **Stocktake of elder abuse awareness, prevention and response activities in Australia, March 2019**

Companion document to the  
***National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians 2019-2023***

Elder abuse is indeed  
'everybody's business'.  
It is also everybody's  
responsibility—a responsibility  
not only to recognise elder  
abuse, but most importantly,  
to respond to it  
effectively.

Australian Law Reform Commission (2017)  
Elder Abuse—A National Legal Response.  
ALRC Report 131, p. 29

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Please note that there is the potential for minor revisions of data in this report.

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# Acronyms and abbreviations

AAG	Australian Association of Gerontology
ABA	Australian Banking Association
ACD	Advance Care Directive
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AGAC	Australian Guardianship and Administration Council
AHD	Advance Health Directive
AIFS	Australian Institute of Family Studies
ALRC	Australian Law Reform Commission
CAG	Council of Attorneys-General
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
COBA	Customer Owned Banking Association
CLC	Community Legal Centre
EAAA	Elder Abuse Action Australia
EAPU	Elder Abuse Prevention Unit
EAHRU	Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit
EPA	Enduring Power of Attorney
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer
NACLC	National Association of Community Legal Centres
NARI	National Ageing Research Institute
National Plan	National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
OPAN	Older Persons Advocacy Network
OPLS	Older Persons Legal Services Network
QLD	Queensland
TAS	Tasmania
SA	South Australia
VIC	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

# Elder abuse is everyone's business

*Everybody's business* is a companion document to the *National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians 2019-2023 (the National Plan)*. The National Plan establishes a framework under which governments will prioritise and report on activity to reduce the prevalence and impact of elder abuse by working together on priority areas that would benefit from national collaboration. As a companion document, *Everybody's business* describes the range of work already underway across Australia as of March 2019 to prevent, intervene, respond to and mitigate abuse of older people. *Everybody's business* describes measures directly funded by government, as well as other initiatives led by non-government organisations, including the private sector. This approach values the contributions made by agencies across Australia and recognises that ending abuse of older people is everybody's responsibility.

*Everybody's business* is the first time a review has attempted to catalogue the wealth of effort and innovation occurring across Australia to prevent and respond to abuse of older people. It has been drafted by the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department, in consultation with Council of Attorneys-General Working Party on Protecting the Rights of Older Australians, and informed by feedback invited from some non-government organisations.

A document of this nature is never complete. We extend our apologies to organisations whose work is not included. At this time, there is no agreement between governments to update *Everybody's business*, but we invite feedback on whether there is merit in publishing revised editions. Feedback, additions or corrections can be provided by emailing [elderabusestocktake@ag.gov.au](mailto:elderabusestocktake@ag.gov.au).

## Audience

*Everybody's business* is primarily intended as a resource for governments and non-government organisations concerned with addressing abuse of older people. It is envisaged that the publication will be used to:

- inform individuals and organisations about the policy and service landscape, and help them learn about the wealth of multidisciplinary efforts underway across Australia to address elder abuse;
- raise awareness of services and innovative approaches that may not be well-known outside their local context, and as a result facilitate learning and development of the sector;
- assist government and non-government organisations identify opportunities for more comprehensive and collaborative responses to elder abuse, building on local or state specific initiatives;
- facilitate reflection on lessons, gaps and opportunities in the current response to elder abuse; and
- help professionals and front-line workers identify partners and referral points, including identifying potential cross-jurisdictional referrals or sources of specialist advice within their jurisdiction.

*Everybody's business* is not designed as a resource for older people or the general community, although it may assist some. The *Directory of Key Services* provides contact details for organisations that can assist older people experiencing abuse, including the contact details of state and territory elder abuse telephone lines.

## Structure

*Everybody's business* is organised to correspond to the priority areas for action identified by the National Plan. While initiatives described in the publication are principally concerned with measures to directly address and prevent abuse of older people in community settings, the publication also identifies key initiatives to respond to abuse of older people in residential aged care settings.

Each initiative in *Everybody's business* is located according to the underlying objective of the initiative undertaken, rather than the organisation undertaking the activities. For that reason, activities of one organisation may appear in several parts of the document. We note a large number of organisations undertake awareness raising and workforce education in relation to elder abuse, and the activities of some organisations may be omitted in the interest of keeping the publication a manageable size.

We have decided not to include links to websites, except in a few instances and in the *Directory of Key Services*. Instead, we have taken care in the way we have titled and described each initiative. If a reader is interested in learning more, it should be possible for a reader to find out more about an initiative by searching online using the italicised headline and the name of the organisation(s) involved.

On the whole, the publication does not include initiatives to create a more age-friendly or dementia-friendly Australia. A wide range of government and non-government organisations are involved in fostering positive ageing by supporting older people to stay active, healthy, connected, and in control. We acknowledge that these initiatives appear to play an important role to play in preventing abuse of older people. However, we have omitted them to keep the document a manageable size.

The publication does not critique or evaluate initiatives or draw any conclusions about effectiveness of responses or best practice models.

The structure of *Everybody's business* follows that of the National Plan:

## PRIORITY AREA FOR ACTION

### **Enhancing our understanding**

Enhancing our understanding involves working together to better understand the risk factors, warning signs, and prevention strategies for abuse of older people, including through data gathering and research.

This section provides a stocktake of:

- Reviews and inquiries
- Reviews of laws relevant to safeguarding older people
- Policy frameworks
- National intergovernmental forums
- Forums for communication between government and community
- National organisations, networks and peak bodies
- Research
- Commissioned research.

### **Improving community awareness and access to information**

Improving community awareness and access to information involves measures directly focused on improving understanding among older people and the broader community about what constitutes abuse and where to go to get further information, support and access to services. This section provides a stocktake of:

- Awareness campaigns
- Educational tools and resources to raise awareness in the general community
- Community-based and peer-led initiatives, including prevention activities
- Awareness raising by Office holders
- Media.

## PRIORITY AREA FOR ACTION

### Strengthening service responses—services

Strengthening services involves ensuring the right support services are in place to assist older people experiencing or those at risk of abuse within a relationship of trust. This section provides a stocktake of:

- Telephone lines
- Elder abuse prevention and resource units
- Trials of integrated models
- Legal assistance services
- Family inclusive services
- Health-justice partnerships
- Individual advocacy.

### Strengthening service responses—protocols, networks, training

Strengthening services involves ensuring the right support services are in place to assist older people experiencing abuse. This section provides a stocktake of measures to build the capacity of the entire service system to address elder abuse:

- Partnerships
- Protocols and practice guidelines
- State-wide and regional response networks
- Workforce training, professional development activities and resources
- Conferences.

### Planning for future decision-making

Planning for future decision-making involves helping Australians to put formal and informal arrangements in place to prepare for decision-making in their later years. This section provides a stocktake of:

- Making informed decisions about the future and planning for transitions
- Family agreements
- Planning ahead
- Supported decision-making
- Workforce training on planning ahead and supported decision-making
- National initiatives.



## PRIORITY AREA FOR ACTION

### **Strengthening safeguards for vulnerable older Australians**

Strengthening safeguards for vulnerable older Australians involves putting in place safeguards for those who may be vulnerable to abuse or neglect, or who have become isolated from family and friends. This section provides a stocktake of:

- Statutory authorities
- Safeguarding at-risk adults
- Police
- Regulatory and complaints agencies.

### **Directory of key services**

This section provides telephone and website details for key national and state and territory services that can assist people seeking help with elder abuse. The elder abuse telephone lines in each state and territory can provide information, confidential advice and referrals to a range of services in each state and territory, matched to the individual needs of the person seeking help.

# Enhancing our understanding

Enhancing our understanding involves working together to better understand the risk factors, warning signs, and prevention strategies for abuse of older people, including through data gathering and research.

This section provides a stocktake of:

- Reviews and inquiries into abuse of older people
- Reviews of laws relevant to safeguarding older people
- Policy frameworks
- Forums for intergovernmental engagement
- Forums for communication between government and community
- National organisations, networks and peak bodies
- Research
- Commissioned research.

## Reviews and inquiries

Reviews and inquiries are a key mechanism through which governments examine issues of public interest and inform the development of public policy and legislative reform.

Two major national reviews related to elder abuse were completed in 2017—the ALRC’s inquiry into Protecting the Rights of Older Australians from Abuse (referred to as ALRC Report 131 throughout the publication) and the Carnell Paterson Review of National Aged Care Quality Regulatory Processes.

In October 2018, the Australian Government established a Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety which will consider the quality of aged care provided to Australians and the extent of substandard care including mistreatment and all forms of abuse. The Australian Parliament has also completed other inquiries about older people, including inquiries into care in residential aged care facilities and older people and the law.

New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia have completed specific reviews or inquiries into elder abuse. All three completed reports express support for a national approach to elder abuse. Queensland and South Australia have completed broader reviews which addressed the abuse of older people as part of their terms of reference. In Victoria and Queensland, the issue of elder abuse was also considered by the Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016) and by the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence (2015).

**National*****Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (2018-2020)***

In September 2018 the Australian Government announced a Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. The Royal Commission's terms of reference concern the quality of aged care services, how best to deliver aged care services, and the challenges and opportunities for delivering accessible, affordable and high quality aged care services in Australia. The Commissioners are required to provide an interim report by 31 October 2019 and a final report by 30 April 2020.

***Board of Taxation review into granny flat arrangements (underway)***

In 2018 the Australian Government requested the Board of Taxation to undertake a review of the tax treatment of granny flat arrangements and recommend any potential changes. This review is in response to ALRC Report 131 which identified the development of formal and legally enforceable family agreements as a measure to prevent elder abuse. The review will consider and make recommendations on the appropriate tax treatment of these arrangements, while considering the interactions between the current tax laws and treatment of 'granny flat interests' under the social security rules. A final report is due to the Government in the second half of 2019.

***Elder Abuse—A National Legal Response: ALRC Report 131 (2017)***

In 2016, the then Attorney-General, Senator the Hon George Brandis QC, announced an inquiry to be conducted by the Australian Law Reform Commission on Protecting the Rights of Older Australians from Abuse. The Final Report, tabled in June 2017, made 43 recommendations across 14 areas, including the development of a National Plan to combat elder abuse, reforms to the aged care sector, reforms to guardianship and administration practices, and enactment of laws to safeguard at-risk adults.

In February 2018, the Council of Attorneys-General agreed to work together to develop the National Plan to address Elder Abuse.

***Carnell-Paterson Review of National Aged Care Quality Regulatory Processes (2017)***

A review of National Aged Care Quality Regulatory Processes was commissioned by the Federal Aged Care Minister, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, and completed in October 2017. Led by Ms Kate Carnell AO and Professor Ron Paterson ONZM, the review reported on regulatory practices relating to monitoring the quality and standard of care in residential aged care facilities. The Federal Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care announced the establishment of a new independent Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission from 1 January 2019.

***Reports of Other Parliamentary Inquiries***

Inquiries include the 2007 report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, *Older People and the Law*; the 2015 report of the Senate Community Affairs References Committee into violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability in institutional and residential settings; and the 2018 report of the House of Representatives Standing committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport, *Report on the Inquiry into the Quality of Care in residential Aged Care Facilities in Australia*.

**NSW**
***Abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults in NSW—the need for action: A special report to Parliament under section 31 of the Ombudsman Act 1974 (2018)***

In 2016, the NSW Ombudsman commenced a standing inquiry into the abuse and neglect of adults with disability in family settings, such as their family home. The report concerns 206 reports of alleged abuse and neglect of adults with disability in the community, of whom some are older people. The inquiry shows there is substantial abuse occurring in family homes and other community settings. It calls for the establishment of an integrated framework and independent lead agency for responding to the abuse and neglect of all vulnerable adults in community settings in NSW.

***Inquiry into Elder Abuse in New South Wales (2016)***

In 2015 the New South Wales Legislative Council commenced a Parliamentary Inquiry into Elder Abuse, which was completed in June 2016. The Committee's report made 11 recommendations including embracing a coordinated and ambitious approach to elder abuse, investing resources in primary prevention activities, funding a comprehensive plan to address the training needs of service providers to enable better identification of and responses to abuse. It also recommended introducing legislation to enhance safeguarding in respect of enduring powers of attorney.

**Vic**
***Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016)***

In 2015 the first Royal Commission into Family Violence was established and completed in March 2016. The Commission considered violence against older people as a form of family violence and identified four key action areas: increasing public awareness and prevention strategies through education; developing and implementing policies to train people who work with older Australians to better identify and respond to elder abuse; building the capacity of specialist services to address family violence against older people; and strengthening investigative processes in relation to abuse of older people.

**Qld**
***Inquiry into the Adequacy of Existing Financial Protections for Queensland's Seniors (2015)***

In 2015 the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee of the Queensland Legislative Assembly commenced an inquiry into the adequacy of existing financial protections for Queensland's seniors. The Committee made 42 recommendations regarding financial elder abuse, including in relation to working with agencies to promote responsible lending practices to better safeguard the interests and assets of vulnerable seniors, amendments to the *Public Guardian Act 2014*, research into elder abuse prevalence and implementing mandatory reporting for clinical staff in aged care.

Qld cont.

***Not Now, Not Ever—Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland (2015)***

The report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland also considered issues associated with elder abuse. Related recommendations advocated undertaking a review into the prevalence and characteristics of elder abuse, incorporating specific elements relating to elder abuse in the Domestic and Family Violence communication strategy, and making representations to the Australian Government relating to elder abuse associated with carer financial assistance.

***Elder Abuse: How well does the law in Queensland cope? (2010)***

In 2010, the Queensland Public Advocate and the Queensland Law Society collaborated to explore the legal framework around elder abuse in Queensland, exploring: civil and criminal law; guardianship; reporting requirements; older persons as victims of crime; law enforcement; domestic violence protection orders; aged care complaints mechanisms; access to the aged care complaints system; and access to legal assistance.

SA

***Joint Committee Inquiry into Matters Relating to Elder Abuse (2017)***

In 2016 the Joint Committee of the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council commenced an inquiry into matters relating to elder abuse in South Australia. The Committee proposed five recommendations including advocating to the Australian Government to develop and support the recommendations proposed in ALRC Report 131, developing a national strategy on elder abuse, collaborating with the Australian Government to ensure progress is made in preventing and addressing elder abuse, introducing a Bill to develop a new *South Australian Adult Protection Act*, and providing ongoing funding to establish a South Australian Elder Abuse Prevention Unit.

***Review of the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service (2017)***

In 2016 the Chief Psychiatrist was appointed to lead a review into clinical care provided at the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service. The review found that Oakden did not meet best practice in most respects, including in relation to processes to determine, escalate and report possible incidents of elder abuse. The Review recommended a new model of care for older persons' mental health services which should include specific consideration of mandatory training to understand abuse and safeguard rights.

WA

***'I never thought it would happen to me': When Trust is Broken—Final Report of the Select Committee into Elder Abuse (2018)***

In 2017 the Parliament of Western Australia commenced an inquiry into elder abuse, with the Final Report tabled in Parliament in September 2018. The report makes 35 recommendations, including: developing a human rights-based approach to responding to elder abuse; commissioning research into elder abuse; developing a culturally safe action plan; providing funding to continue developing responses to address elder abuse; and undertaking legal reform.

## Reviews of laws relevant to safeguarding vulnerable older people

All states and territories, with the exception of Northern Territory, have recently completed or are currently undertaking reviews of legislation relevant to safeguarding vulnerable older people. Reviews have not occurred in the Northern Territory as the two major acts are recent—*Advance Personal Planning Act 2013 (NT)* and the *Guardianship of Adults Act 2016 (NT)*.

Reviews have considered a wide range of matters associated with guardianship law, models of supported decision-making and substitute decision-making (including powers of attorney) and the roles and powers of key agencies. The Victorian, Queensland, South Australian and Western Australian reviews have informed legislative change. Governments in some states and territories are still considering their response to some recommendations, or to the reviews overall.

### REVIEWS OF LAWS RELEVANT TO SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE OLDER PEOPLE

<b>National</b>	<p><b><i>Equality, Capacity and Disability in Commonwealth Laws: ALRC Report 124 (2014)</i></b></p> <p>In 2013 the ALRC commenced a review of equal recognition before the law and legal capacity for people with a disability. The Final Report made 55 recommendations concerning national decision-making principles, supported decision-making in Commonwealth laws, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, access to justice, restrictive practices, electoral matters, and state and territory legislation.</p>
<b>NSW</b>	<p><b><i>New South Wales Law Reform Commission Review of the Guardianship Act 1987 (2018)</i></b></p> <p>The New South Wales Law Reform Commission completed a review and report on the desirability of changes to the <i>Guardianship Act 1987</i> in 2018. The Review recommended the introduction of a new Act which establishes a framework for assisted decision-making drawing on contemporary understandings, including the introduction of a formal supported decision-making framework. The Review also recommended that the new Act should introduce new investigative and advocacy functions to be carried out by a new statutory agency known as the Public Advocate.</p>
<b>Vic</b>	<p><b><i>Victorian Parliament Law Reform Committee Inquiry into Powers of Attorney (2010)</i></b></p> <p>The Victorian Law Reform Committee completed an inquiry into powers of attorney in 2010. The Committee made 90 recommendations aimed at streamlining and simplifying power of attorney documents, seeking to strike a balance between providing better safeguards against abuse and ensuring that power of attorney documents remain easy to use.</p>

## REVIEWS OF LAWS RELEVANT TO SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE OLDER PEOPLE

<p><b>Vic</b> cont.</p>	<p><b><i>Victorian Law Reform Commission Guardianship Final Report 24 (2012)</i></b></p> <p>The Victorian Law Reform Commission completed a review of the <i>Guardianship and Administration Act 1986</i> in 2012. The Guardianship Report included 440 recommendations to modernise, clarify and simplify guardianship laws to better meet the needs of Victoria’s changing population.</p> <p>The <i>Powers of Attorney Act 2014</i> (Vic) and the <i>Medical Treatment Planning and Decisions Act 2016</i> (Vic) have implemented recommendations from both of these reviews. The <i>Guardianship and Administration Bill 2018</i>, which was introduced into the Victorian Parliament in December 2018, implements further recommendations from the Guardianship Report, and draws on the 2015 Report of the Australian Law Reform Commission on Equality, Capacity and Disability in Commonwealth Laws.</p>
<p><b>Qld</b></p>	<p><b><i>Queensland Law Reform Commission Review of Queensland’s Guardianship Laws (2010)</i></b></p> <p>The Queensland Law Reform Commission completed a review of Queensland’s guardianship laws in 2010 (QLRC Report). The report made 317 recommendations for legislative and administrative improvements across a broad range of areas in guardianship. The Guardianship and Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 which has been introduced into the Queensland Parliament implements some of the recommendations of the QLRC Report.</p>
<p><b>SA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Closing the Gaps: Enhancing South Australia’s Response to the Abuse of Vulnerable Older People (2011)</i></b></p> <p>Commissioned by the Office for Ageing Well (formerly Office for the Ageing) and led by the Office of the Public Advocate in collaboration with the University of South Australia, <i>Closing the Gaps</i> aimed to develop a rights-based framework that provided a consistent, coordinated response across all relevant South Australian agencies to prevent and address the issues of abuse and harm to vulnerable older people. It recommended legislative reform, policy development, a detailed plan for community education and workforce training, improved service responses, a state-wide data collection system and the use of risk assessment tools.</p> <p>The <i>Closing the Gaps</i> report has informed South Australian elder abuse prevention, awareness, recognition and response to policy development since its release through the <i>Strategy to Safeguard the Rights of Older South Australians</i> and its action plan. In 2018 the South Australian Government introduced the <i>Office for the Ageing (Adult Safeguarding) Amendment Bill 2018</i>. The legislation establishes a new Adult Safeguarding Unit, the first of its kind in Australia. The new Unit will have an array of responses to investigate reports of concerns and safeguard the rights of adults who are vulnerable to abuse or neglect, focusing on prevention and early intervention. The Unit is likely to commence operations later in 2019.</p> <p>The operation of the <i>SA Advance Care Directives Act 2013</i> will be reviewed in 2019 and the report tabled in Parliament.</p>

## REVIEWS OF LAWS RELEVANT TO SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE OLDER PEOPLE

<p><b>WA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Department of the Attorney-General Statutory Review of the Guardianship and Administration Act 1990 (2015)</i></b></p> <p>A statutory review of the <i>Guardianship and Administration Act 1990</i> examined the operation and effectiveness of the Act. The report made 86 recommendations for amendments to the Act. The Western Australian Government has made an election commitment to amend the Act and drafting of an Amendment Bill is underway.</p>
<p><b>Tas</b></p>	<p><b><i>Tasmania Law Reform Institute Review of the Guardianship and Administration Act 1995 Tasmania (2018)</i></b></p> <p>The Tasmanian Attorney-General requested that the <i>Guardianship and Administration Act 1995</i> be reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the needs of people with impaired decision-making capacity and is in line with international human rights instruments. The Tasmania Law Reform Institute undertook the review and provided a final report in late 2018.</p>
<p><b>ACT</b></p>	<p><b><i>Australian Capital Territory Law Reform Advisory Council Inquiry into the Terms and Operation of the Guardianship and Management of Property Act 1991 (2016)</i></b></p> <p>The Australian Capital Territory Law Reform Advisory Council commenced an inquiry into the terms and operation of the <i>Guardianship and Management of Property Act 1991</i> in 2014 to ensure that the Act reflects best practice in guardianship law relating to adults. The final report made recommendations regarding law and policy reform to, essentially, replace a substitute decision-making model with a will, preferences and right's-based supported decision-making model.</p>



## Policy frameworks

International, national, state and territory and local government frameworks address issues relating to the abuse of older persons. The Commonwealth and state and territory governments have joined together to develop Australia's first National Plan addressing abuse of older people, which provides a framework to focus on priority areas that would benefit from national collaboration. The National Plan complements policy frameworks developed by state and territory governments. Some jurisdictions address elder abuse through broader policies on healthy ageing and ending family violence, while others have implemented specific elder abuse policies. Many local governments also have their own policies and strategies to support healthy ageing. Civil society organisations—such as researchers, community sector organisations, peak bodies and philanthropic organisations—are also developing policies and strategic frameworks to address elder abuse.

### GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT ADDRESS THE ABUSE OF OLDER PEOPLE

<b>International</b>	<p><b><i>International Human Rights Instruments</i></b></p> <p>Australia is a party to a number of human rights instruments that protect the rights of older persons equally with other persons, including the <i>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</i> and the <i>International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</i>. The <i>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i> specifically protects the rights to security in old age. Other instruments that Australia is a party to, such as the <i>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</i>, <i>Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</i> are also relevant to older people.</p>
<b>National</b>	<p><b><i>National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians 2019-2023</i></b></p> <p>The National Plan establishes a framework under which governments will prioritise and report on activity to reduce the prevalence and impact of elder abuse by working together on priority areas that would benefit from national collaboration. The Council of Attorneys-General has requested that jurisdictions develop an Implementation Plan by the first meeting of 2019.</p>
<b>NSW</b>	<p><b><i>New South Wales Ageing Strategy 2016–2020</i></b></p> <p>The strategy is committed to promoting opportunities for older people to lead active and rewarding lives. The strategy commits to supporting initiatives that improve respect for and social inclusion of older people including raising awareness about elder abuse, as well as implementing prevention and response strategies.</p> <p><b><i>Preventing and responding to abuse of older people (elder abuse): New South Wales Interagency Policy (2018)</i></b></p> <p>Building upon the <i>New South Wales Ageing Strategy 2016–2020</i>, the <i>New South Wales Interagency Policy</i> outlines a detailed framework for government agencies to act to prevent abuse, and support, intervene and protect people experiencing abuse. The policy mandates that all agencies with significant interface with older people through service delivery are required to ensure they have internal policies, procedures and protocols in place to facilitate prevention, support, intervention and response.</p>

## GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT ADDRESS THE ABUSE OF OLDER PEOPLE

**Vic**

### ***Ending Family Violence—Victoria’s Plan for Change (10 Year Plan) (2016)***

The policy framework for Victoria’s response to elder abuse is captured within the policy for ending family violence. The government has committed to work with local communities to raise awareness, reform justice systems, and to fund Support and Safety Hubs—specialist services across the state to address family violence and abuse. The government has increased funding for a range of initiatives to address elder abuse and promote empowerment of older people.

**Qld**

### ***Queensland: An Age-Friendly Community—Strategic Direction Statement and Action Plan***

The plan provides a framework for initiatives to support a community in which older people’s contributions are valued and they are free from age related barriers to community participation. The Action Plan addresses elder abuse broadly through a number of approaches including ensuring seniors have affordable, accessible housing options, are supported to be active in their community, and are valued and respected. Specific actions include expanding the Elder Abuse Prevention Units Helpline and the seniors legal and support services, developing new educational resources and promoting awareness of financial elder abuse, and funding programs to address elder abuse prevention in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The Plan is updated every year.

### ***Queensland Financial Inclusion Plan (2016)***

The plan sets out strategies to ensure Queenslanders are supported in achieving future financial wellbeing, particularly those who are most vulnerable to financial exclusion and hardship, such as older people. One of the priority actions identified is the implementation of the government response to the Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into the adequacy of financial protections for Queensland’s seniors.

## GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT ADDRESS THE ABUSE OF OLDER PEOPLE

**SA**

### ***Prosperity Through Longevity: South Australia's Ageing Plan 2014–2019***

The plan aims to ensure all South Australians have a fulfilling, active and enjoyable life at every age. South Australia's vision for an age-friendly state provides a context for addressing elder abuse, by ensuring older people are safe and secure at home, in relationships and in the community, and implementing prevention and early intervention activities to address risk factors for abuse. A new State Ageing Plan is intended for release in 2019 and will set out the SA Government's commitment to support older South Australians to age well.

### ***Strategy to Safeguard the Rights of Older South Australians 2014–2021 and Action Plan 2015–2021***

This strategy outlines the government's commitment to elder abuse prevention, awareness, recognition and response, and includes a charter of rights and freedoms for older South Australians to ensure all older people can live with autonomy, dignity, freedom from harm, and enjoyment of life. The Strategy articulates a four-step approach to addressing elder abuse: working from the charter, understanding the problem, recognising the signs and taking appropriate action. The accompanying action plan sets out a range of priorities including raising awareness through the Stop Elder Abuse campaign, initiatives to support and educate carers to minimise the risk of financial abuse, initiatives to better support culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the establishment of the Stop Elder Abuse website and Elder Abuse Prevention Phone Line service to assist older people or those concerned about abuse, and reviews and reform of existing legislation to better safeguard the rights of older people.

**WA**

### ***Stopping Family and Domestic Violence Policy***

This State government policy includes a commitment to respond to elder abuse. The Department of Communities (Communities), as the lead State Government agency for elder abuse, is responsible for:

- Conducting an educational program for professionals who frequently come into contact with the elderly so they can better identify possible abuse
- Implementing measures to assist isolated elderly persons' connection to the broader community
- Taking a key role in negotiations with the State and Federal Governments to develop a national strategy and a funding model to enable services to be delivered equitably.

In 2017, Western Australia was accepted as an affiliate of the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. The Department of Communities works to address elder abuse through collaborations with government and non-government agencies, including funding Advocare to manage the state-wide elder abuse hotline.

## GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT ADDRESS THE ABUSE OF OLDER PEOPLE

<p><b>Tas</b></p>	<p><b><i>Strong, Liveable Communities: Tasmania’s Active Ageing Plan 2017–2022</i></b></p> <p><i>Strong, Liveable Communities</i> outlines the government’s commitment to supporting people to maintain their health, increase their participation, continue learning and feeling secure as they age. Within Action Area 4, supporting awareness and improving the response to elder abuse is identified as a key area of focus to ensure older Tasmanians feel safe and secure and have their essential needs met. The plan commits to improving data collection to understand abuse, implementing Tasmania’s Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy and considering the findings from ALRC Report 131.</p> <p><b><i>Protecting Older Tasmanians from Abuse: Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy and Action Plan 2015–2018</i></b></p> <p><i>Protecting Older Tasmanians from Abuse</i> outlines the government’s commitment to ensuring older Tasmanians live with dignity and feel secure and safe. It outlines the approach to elder abuse prevention, which focuses on four strategic themes: awareness, empowerment, action and support. Key activities under the action plan include developing guiding principles that protect and respect older Tasmanians, building regional networks to collaborate on awareness raising and support activities, workforce capacity-building, establishing a helpline and elder abuse prevention awareness campaign, and ensuring good governance to support the implementation of the action plan.</p>
<p><b>NT</b></p>	<p><b><i>Strong Seniors: Seniors Participation Framework 2016–2019</i></b></p> <p>This framework is an accompaniment to the <i>Strong Society, Confident Culture Strategy</i>—a framework to promote social participation and ensure all Territorians have access to the same opportunities and resources for economic and social success. It outlines the government’s commitment to adopting an age-friendly approach to effectively respond to the opportunities and challenges associated with an ageing population. Objectives include raising awareness of issues around elder abuse and supporting an elder abuse information line.</p>
<p><b>ACT</b></p>	<p><b><i>Age-Friendly Canberra—a Vision for our City</i></b></p> <p>This is a high level document which outlines twelve foundational principles to provide direction to the work of ACT Government to promote the ACT as an Age-Friendly City. The following principle identified in the document relates directly to elder abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The abuse of older people in any form is not tolerated. The protection of older people from any form of abuse is paramount.</li> </ul> <p>The principle identified will be used to inform the development of an Age-Friendly City Plan.</p>

## GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT ADDRESS THE ABUSE OF OLDER PEOPLE

### OTHER POLICY DEVELOPMENT

<p><b>International</b></p>	<p><b><i>International Human Rights forums</i></b></p> <p>The Australian Government and civil society organisations report and contribute to international human rights forums associated with ageing and violence against women. The National Association of Community Legal Centres is contributing to the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing.</p>
<p><b>National</b></p>	<p><b><i>Abuse of Older People: A Community Response (2018)</i></b></p> <p>In 2018, Seniors Rights Service coordinated wide ranging consultations to identify issues of common concern to the community sector and to provide a platform for civil society to communicate priorities and recommendations to governments. Consultations were coordinated as part of the 5th National Elder Abuse conference. The outcome these consultations, are set out in the final report <i>Abuse of older people: A community response</i>, which can be downloaded from the Seniors Rights Service webpage. The outcomes of the consultation were presented to the United Nations 9th Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing.</p> <p><b><i>The Justice Report—Older Persons Chapter (2018)</i></b></p> <p>In 2018, the Law Council of Australia released a national review into access to justice in Australia for people experiencing significant disadvantage. Older persons were one of the thirteen priority groups identified as facing significant social and economic disadvantage in access to justice. The report identified elder abuse and associated legal problems as a significant emerging area of legal need affecting growing numbers of older Australians.</p>
<p><b>Vic</b></p>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse Community Action Plan for Victoria (funded by Gandel Philanthropy)</i></b></p> <p>The plan, developed by the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) with support from Seniors Rights Victoria, the Office of Public Advocate, and community service providers, identifies gaps and sets out 10 priorities to address elder abuse. The priorities include the need to clarify the relationship between family violence and elder abuse; raise community awareness of elder abuse and promote a positive of older people to reduce ageism; increase ways to help older people disclose elder abuse without fear, and provide education and training on elder abuse for all health professionals in health and aged care services.</p>
<p><b>Tasmania</b></p>	<p><b><i>Prevention of Elder Abuse Tasmania (ongoing)</i></b></p> <p>The University of Tasmania’s research network on Prevention of Elder Abuse Tasmania (PEAT) has partnered with the Tasmanian Law Reform Institute, Equal Opportunity Tasmania and the Council of the Ageing to develop and promote policy options, including legislative and legal responses, to prevent elder abuse in Tasmania.</p>

## National intergovernmental forums

The following forums are used by Ministers and officials to discuss abuse of older people at the national level.

### NATIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUMS

#### National

##### ***Council of Attorneys-General***

The Council of Attorneys-General (CAG) consists of Attorneys-General from the Australian Government, all states and territories, and the New Zealand Minister for Justice. CAG considers intergovernmental law reforms and implementation of cross jurisdictional oversight measures. It is the mechanism by which Commonwealth and state and territory Ministers discuss elder abuse. It provides stewardship of the development and implementation of the National Plan, noting that responsibilities to implement the National Plan sit across multiple agencies in each government. CAG meets twice a year.

##### ***Implementation Executive Group (IEG)—Implementation of the National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians***

The IEG is the mechanism by which Commonwealth and state and territory officials meet to progress the implementation of the *National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians 2019-2023*. Members include representatives from justice agencies and social policy agencies with lead responsibility for elder abuse in the jurisdiction. Activities are implemented via Working Groups. The Australian Government's Attorney-General's Department provides secretariat support.

##### ***Council of Attorneys-General Working Group on Protecting the Rights of Older Australians***

The Working Group on Protecting the Rights of Older Australians was the forum where Commonwealth and state and territory officials discussed elder abuse between 2016 and 2019. Members included representatives from justice agencies and social policy agencies with lead responsibility for elder abuse in the jurisdiction. It has been replaced by the *Implementation Executive Group*.

##### ***Australian Guardianship and Administration Council***

The Australian Guardianship and Administration Council (AGAC) is comprised of Public Advocates, Public Guardians, Boards and Tribunals and Public and State Trustees or their equivalents throughout Australia. The role of these twenty-five agencies is to protect adults who have a disability that impairs their capacity to make decisions and manage their affairs. AGAC provides a national forum for state and territory guardianship and administration agencies. AGAC sets the national standards for guardians and financial managers, and works towards a consistent approach to common issues across states and territories.

## Forums for communication between government and community

Advisory groups provide a mechanism for communication between government and the community. Some jurisdictions have specific forums on elder abuse while others address elder abuse as part of a broader approach to healthy ageing or family violence. Groups listed here largely comprise groups convened by government but also include advisory groups convened by civil society where government participates as a member. Many local governments also have forums and committees which enable older people and interested community members to engage directly with policy makers.

### FORUMS FOR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY

#### NSW

##### ***New South Wales Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing***

This council is the official advisory body to the government, providing information and advice to the Minister for Ageing on matters that affect the needs, interests and wellbeing of older people and the impact of population ageing on government and the community. The Council also monitors the impact of relevant policies, programs and trends on older people and consults with community and stakeholders on issues relating to ageing. The Council currently has 10 members, appointed as individuals on the basis of their expertise and experience. The Council meets every two months.

##### ***New South Wales Ageing Strategy Interdepartmental Committee***

This committee oversees the implementation and monitoring of initiatives under the New South Wales Ageing Strategy, providing strategic advice on the impact, challenges and opportunities of the ageing population and leading appropriate responses including policy and legislative reform. The committee comprises senior departmental representatives and members from the private sector, the non-government sector, local government and the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing. The committee is chaired by the Executive Director, Inclusion and Early Intervention, Department of Family and Community Services, and meets twice a year.

##### ***New South Wales Steering Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse***

This committee supports a strategic approach to development, implementation and review of measures aimed at tackling elder abuse. The Committee reports to the Ageing Strategy Interdepartmental Committee (above). The Committee's activities include identifying state-wide policy direction and decision-making to effect an efficient and effective state-wide response, overseeing the review of the *Interagency Protocol for Responding to Abuse of Older People*, and monitoring local and regional policies and programs for consistency and relevance. The Committee comprises senior departmental representatives from a range of agencies. The Committee is chaired by the Director of Ageing, Department of Family and Community Services, and meets quarterly.

**Vic*****Elder Abuse Advisory Group***

This advisory group provides advice on initiatives to prevent and reduce elder abuse in Victoria, works to assist in achieving integrated responses to elder abuse, and promotes the work of the *Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Initiative* within relevant sectors and in the community. The Advisory Group comprises representatives from more than 20 government and community organisations.

***Steering Committee of the Integrated Model of Care for Responding to Suspected Elder Abuse Project***

The model aims to strengthen elder abuse responses and support within Victorian health services, creating multiple entry points for older people and their carers and families to access specialist support services. The committee's objectives are to provide direction and advice on project design and implementation, and to promote the integrated model of care within relevant sectors and in the community. The Committee is comprised of representatives from more than 20 government and community organisations. The Committee is chaired by the Director of Diversity and Community Participation, Department of Health and Human Services, and meets every two months.

***Steering Committee of the Elder Abuse Prevention Networks***

The objectives of this committee are to provide guidance and coordination to support the implementation of the ten elder abuse prevention networks.

**Qld*****Queensland Age-Friendly Communities Senior Officers Group***

The group provides a forum to share information and form a community of practice to support the development of age-friendly communities. The group also provides leadership on implementation of the *Queensland: An Age-Friendly Community Action Plan*, oversees monitoring and reporting, and provides advice on specific issues relating to, and impacting upon achievement of, the age-friendly vision. Membership comprises senior representatives from Queensland government agencies whose portfolios involve, support and affect Queensland seniors, as well as those involved in implementation of the Action Plan.

***Elder Abuse Prevention Unit Reference Group***

The UnitingCare Community Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU) is focused on prevention of elder abuse in Queensland, primarily through community education and awareness-raising. The EAPU reference group includes representatives from the Queensland Government and guardianship agencies, researchers, peak organisations representing older people and other agencies that provide legal, community and aged care services for seniors. Meetings are held quarterly.



Qld cont.

***Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council***

This council was established to monitor and champion the implementation of the recommendations from the *Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland* report and the *Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy*. The Council provides independent oversight of implementation activities and reports to the Premier and the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence on implementation progress and achievements. Council members are appointed by the Premier and include representatives from key sectors in the community and government.

SA

***The Strategy to Safeguard the Rights of Older South Australians Advisory Group***

Established by for the Office for Ageing Well, SA Health, the Advisory Group provides input and advice in relation to the implementation of the *Strategy to Safeguard the Rights of Older South Australians 2014–2021*, its actions and future priorities. This includes advising on priority actions and issues arising, contributing to legislative reviews, and disseminating information. Membership comprises representatives from 10 government agencies and community organisations. Chaired by the Office for Ageing Well, the group meets at least twice a year.

In addition, the Office for Ageing Well has developed ongoing partnerships with 600 organisations and a feedback network comprising 3,000 adults aged 60 and over who have indicated their willingness to provide feedback on policies and projects.

***Ageing Well in Diverse Communities***

Office for Ageing Well partners with and funds a range of organisations to engage Aboriginal, LGBTI and CALD communities around safeguarding information and communicating adult safeguarding messages. Over time, these community partnerships will become community response networks to support local communities to safeguarding their rights and facilitate access to safeguarding measures.

***Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, South Australia***

Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, South Australia was established in 1998 raise community awareness and respond to elder abuse through promotion of intervention and prevention strategies. APEA recognises and responds to the special needs of certain groups including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal communities, older people with disabilities or dementia and those from rural and remote locations. Membership of the Alliance comprises key stakeholders in relation to responding to the abuse and exploitation of older people. These organisations are often referred to as ‘agencies of last resort’ in helping to prevent or minimise the risk of abuse.

## FORUMS FOR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY

<p><b>WA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, Western Australia</i></b></p> <p>The alliance was established to identify systemic issues pertinent to abuse prevention and protection, to inform policy and promote community and professional awareness and understanding about elder abuse prevention. Membership of the Alliance comprises senior representatives from 11 government departments and independent organisations. The Alliance meets every two months.</p> <p><b><i>Western Australian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse</i></b></p> <p>This network of service providers within the aged care community aims to promote community awareness of elder abuse. The network comprises state government departments, local governments and community organisations.</p>
<p><b>Tas</b></p>	<p><b><i>State-wide Elder Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee</i></b></p> <p>The committee works with the Tasmanian Government and broader community to implement a whole-of-government response to the abuse of older people in Tasmania in accord with the vision outlined in the <i>Protecting Older Tasmanians from Abuse: Tasmania's elder abuse prevention strategy</i>. The committee assists with the implementation and monitoring of activities under the Strategy, and ensures the perspectives of the affected community are reflected in advice provided to Government. The committee comprises representatives from government departments and community organisations. Chaired by the Director, Disability and Community Services, Department of Health and Human Services, the committee meets quarterly.</p>
<p><b>NT</b></p>	<p><b><i>Minister's Advisory Council for Senior Territorians</i></b></p> <p>This council was established to provide high level and strategic advice to the Minister for Territory Families regarding issues relevant to the social, economic and civic life of seniors. The Advisory Council provides effective links between government, key stakeholders and the seniors community to improve policy outcomes. The Advisory Council comprises representatives from government and key peak bodies, as well as community members. Chaired by the Minister for Territory Families, the Advisory Council meets three times per year.</p>

**ACT*****Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing***

The council provides strategic advice to the government on issues affecting older people in the Australian Capital Territory, assisting the government to develop and implement positive ageing policies in order to advance the status and interests of older people. The Advisory Council's work includes providing advice to the Minister for Seniors and Veterans about matters relating to older Canberrans, undertaking research, evaluating policies and programs affecting the community, and disseminating information to, and consulting with, community organisations. The Advisory Council has identified the prevention of elder abuse and the promotion of substitute decision-making for older people as priority areas of work.

***ACT Elder Abuse Network***

The ACT Elder Abuse Network, convened by COTA ACT, provides a forum to share information relevant to the prevention of and support in relation to elder abuse. The Network also aims to contribute to policy development by acting as a forum for discussion on issues relevant to elder abuse. The network is comprised of workers from organisations with a significant interest and involvement in the prevention of elder abuse in the ACT. The Network meets every two months.

## National organisations, networks and peak bodies

National organisations, networks and peak bodies play an important role in driving change, promoting understanding of elder abuse and advocating on behalf of older Australians and their families. While the following list is not comprehensive, the following table identifies some of the national organisations, networks and peak bodies which have focused on elder abuse, including through submissions to the ALRC and other inquiries. Other networks and peak bodies are also becoming involved in promoting community understanding of elder abuse.

### NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND PEAK BODIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE, THEIR FAMILIES AND CARERS

#### National

##### ***COTA Australia***

COTA Australia’s role is to promote, improve and protect the wellbeing of older people in Australia as citizens and consumers. COTA’s priorities are aged care reform, improving health services, and fighting ageism and age discrimination. COTA operates in all states and territories.

##### ***National Seniors***

National Seniors represents the concerns of people aged over 50 to government, businesses and the broader community. It provides information on a range of topics, conducts advocacy activities to improve the quality of life of older Australians and conducts research to inform its activities.

##### ***Dementia Australia***

Dementia Australia advocates for the needs of people living with all types of dementia and their families and carers, delivers national dementia services and programs which provide support services, education and information, and provides research grants together with the Dementia Australia Research Foundation.

##### ***Carers Australia***

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia’s unpaid carers, advocating on their behalf to influence policies and services at a national level.

##### ***National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)***

NACCHO represents the 143 community controlled health services operated by Aboriginal communities in locations across urban, regional and remote Australia.

##### ***Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia (FECCA)***

FECCA is the peak, national body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria has led an elder abuse initiative for several years, working with approximately 20 ethnic communities.

## NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND PEAK BODIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE, THEIR FAMILIES AND CARERS

### National

#### ***Silver Rainbow***

Silver Rainbow provides national coordination and support activities promoting the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) older people and the ongoing delivery of LGBTI awareness training to the aged care sector.

#### ***Country Women's Association of Australia***

The Country Women's Association of Australia advances the rights and equity of women, families and communities in Australia through advocacy and empowerment, especially for those living in regional, rural and remote Australia.

## NETWORKS AND PEAK BODIES

### National

#### ***National Aged Care Alliance (NACA)***

The National Aged Care Alliance is a representative body of peak national organisations in aged care, including consumer groups, providers, unions and health professionals.

#### ***Elder Abuse Action Australia (EAAA)***

In October 2017, the Australian Government Attorney-General announced funding for EAAA as Australia's first national elder abuse peak body. EAAA will provide a national voice for action that eliminates elder abuse. EAAA aims to develop and promote systemic policy reforms regarding elder abuse, raise community awareness, and undertake activities to share and coordinate information, resources and practice for national consistency and efficiency.

#### ***National Legal Aid***

National Legal Aid represents the eight state and territory legal aid commissions in Australia that provide legal assistance services to the public. Over 2017–2019, National Legal Aid has identified preventing and responding to elder abuse as one of three key national priorities.

#### ***Older Persons Legal Service Network (OPLS)***

OPLS is a network of legal services that advocates for the rights and interests of older Australians. OPLS sits under the umbrella of the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC), the peak national organisation representing community legal centres.

**National**  
cont.

### ***Law Council of Australia***

The Law Council of Australia is the representative body of the Australian legal profession.

### ***Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG)***

The purpose of AAG is to improve the experience of ageing through connecting research, policy and practice. It has a multidisciplinary membership and convenes a special interest group on elder abuse.

### ***CPA Australia***

CPA Australia is an accounting body with a global membership.

### ***Australian Banking Association (ABA)***

The ABA is comprised of 24 member banks and contributes to the development of public policy on banking, including the new Code of Banking Practice.

### ***Customer Owned Banking Association (COBA)***

COBA is comprised of 66 customer owned organisations: 44 credit unions, 20 mutual banks, one building society and one other, and a number of affiliate members.

### ***Financial Services Council (FSC)***

The FSC is the peak body which set standards and policy for Australia's retail and wholesale funds management businesses, superannuation funds, life insurers, financial advisory networks and licensed trustee councils. FSC convenes the Elder Financial Services Working Group to facilitate discussions among the financial services industry to address elder abuse.

### ***Self-Managed Super Fund Association (SMSF)***

The SMSF Association is the independent professional body representing Australia's self-managed super fund sector.

## Research

Around the world, researchers in a wide variety of disciplines are conducting research relevant to understanding and preventing abuse of older people. Much of the work is cross-disciplinary. The Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) and the Australian Research Network on Law and Ageing (ARNLA) are Australia wide networks of professionals concerned with ageing, including the abuse of older people. The breadth of work occurring within Australia is too diverse to review in a document such as this. Instead the document draws attention to resources which offer an introduction to research on abuse of older Australians.

### RESOURCES WHICH PROVIDE AN INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH ON ABUSE OF OLDER AUSTRALIANS

#### National

##### ***Elder abuse: Understanding issues, frameworks and responses. AIFS Research Report No. 35, 2016.***

Commissioned by the Australian Government Attorney-General's department, this report prepared by researchers at the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) provides a broad analysis of the issues raised by elder abuse in the Australian context, drawing on international material where relevant.

##### ***Understanding elder abuse: A scoping study, 2017 (NARI)***

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute of the University of Melbourne commissioned the National Ageing Research Institute to conduct a scoping study reviewing the published literature on elder abuse with specific focus on intergenerational elder abuse, and the evidence supporting interventions to address this abuse. Additional funding support was provided from Gandel Philanthropy.

##### ***Child Family Community Australia (CFCA) and Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS library data base)***

CFCA at AIFS offers a free research and information helpdesk for child, family and community service providers, researchers and policy makers. CFCA curates a diverse array of online publications, webinars and PowerPoint presentations on abuse of older people. These can be accessed by going to the CFCA homepage and searching "elder abuse".

The AIFS library collects material on elder abuse, and maintains a publically available annotated bibliography. The AIFS library collects published research as well as other material, such as community sector reports, evaluations and government reviews. At the time of writing, nearly 400 items are available online to the general public. The AIFS bibliography and catalogue can be accessed via <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/bibliography/elder-abuse>.

## Commissioned research

Governments and other stakeholders periodically commission research and fund evaluations into elder abuse. While this list is not comprehensive, the following material provides insight into some research commissioned by governments since 2017.

A number of research reports use an ecological framework to understand the factors associated with abuse. This framework proposes that risk or protective factors can arise at the individual, community and societal level. This perspective allows examination of factors associated with the older person and the perpetrator, within the context of their relationship, community and society. For example, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare’s report on vulnerability of older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders uses this framework to present indicators of potential risk factors for abuse, including functional dependency, disability, poor physical health, mental illness, substance uses, traumatic life events, financial stress and economic hardship and safety. Similarly, reports commissioned by the Queensland Government use the ecological framework.

### COMMISSIONED RESEARCH

#### National

#### *National Research Agenda on Elder Abuse (2017-ongoing)*

The Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department is funding research to improve understanding of the dynamics and drivers of elder abuse, focused on estimating the prevalence of elder abuse in Australia. The NSW Department of Family and Community Services provided a financial contribution to this research, focused on improving understanding about the needs of older people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.

The development of a national prevalence study is a complex undertaking, and work is underway to arrive at an Australian prevalence estimate by 2020. The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), is leading a consortium of researchers to design the study which includes the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI), the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) at the University of New South Wales and the Social Research Centre (SRC). The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is exploring indicators of abuse and factors which may place an older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person at risk of abuse drawing on administrative and survey data already held by the AIHW.

Research outputs of the National Research Agenda on Elder Abuse include:

- The design of the Australian National Prevalence Study on Elder Abuse. The National Prevalence Study will comprise two national surveys, one of older people, and one of the general community—the design is led by the AIFS, in partnership with NARI and SRC.
- Insights into abuse of older people, based on analysis of Australian Bureau Statistics data sets—led by SPRC, in partnership with AIFS.
- Insights into vulnerability of older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—led by AIHW.



## COMMISSIONED RESEARCH

### National cont.

In 2019, the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department will fund the National Prevalence Study on Elder Abuse. Findings will be available in 2020. The prevalence study will include two main elements: an older persons survey and a general community survey.

- The older persons survey will collect data on personal experiences of elder abuse, which will enable comparison to the prevalence of elder abuse with other countries, such as Canada and UK.
- The general community survey will explore attitudes and behaviours that may enable or permit elder abuse, and collect information about family-identified concerns about the abuse of older family members.

#### ***National Audit and Operational Framework for Keeping Women Safe in the Homes—Older Women, UNSW (ongoing)***

The Australian Government Department of Social Services, has provided funding to the Gendered Violence Research Network and SPRC at UNSW to undertake a national audit and develop an operational framework for keeping women safe in their homes. The project will assess the outcomes of the Safe at Home and Keeping Women Safe in the Homes programs, including their effectiveness of responses for women from diverse backgrounds. The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department providing funding to extend the Audit and Framework to include a focus on older women, aged 50 years and over.

### NSW

#### ***Can Indicators Enable Abuse Prevention and Effective Response? (2018)***

With the agreement of the NSW Government, Professor Tracey McDonald AM of the Australian Catholic University analysed three years of calls from the NSW Elder Abuse Prevention and Resource and Helpline to improve understanding of the circumstances surrounding older people that prompt someone to call and report their suspicions of abuse. Findings were presented at the 5th elder abuse conference, in 2018.

### Vic

#### ***Ageing Without Fear—Elder Abuse as Family Violence discussion papers, Seniors Rights Victoria (2018)***

Commissioned by the Victorian Government, Seniors Rights Victoria has produced discussion papers on elder abuse as family violence, elder abuse and gender and preventing elder abuse. The goal of these papers is to improve understanding and generate thoughts on best practice in preventing and responding to elder abuse:

1. *Elder Abuse as Family Violence* explains how elder abuse is a form of family violence, and draws attention to its unique causes and characteristics.
2. *Elder Abuse, Gender and Sexuality* explores the ways gender and sexual identity can affect an individual's experience of elder abuse, mistreatment and disrespect. It also includes a discussion of the often under-recognised crime of sexual assault of older women.
3. *Preventing Elder Abuse* describes activities that help prevent elder abuse from occurring, as well as actions that enable people to detect and respond to elder abuse in order to inhibit reoccurrences and prevent long-term harm.

<p><b>Vic cont.</b></p>	<p><b><i>Preventing Elder Abuse: a literature review for the SMPCP Elder Abuse Prevention Network, Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership (2018)</i></b></p> <p>This literature review focuses on the prevention of elder abuse and examines existing literature relevant to the primary prevention of elder abuse; the intention associated with prevention in managing elder abuse; applicability of current strategies that are used to prevent family violence against women and children to the elder abuse context; and specific items to be included in a primary prevention framework for elder abuse.</p>
<p><b>Qld</b></p>	<p><b><i>Review into the Prevalence and Characteristics of Elder Abuse in Queensland (2017)</i></b></p> <p>This report has been published by the Queensland Government Department of Communities and was undertaken by researchers from Curtin and Murdoch Universities. It includes a review of current policy, legislative and service responses to elder abuse in Queensland. It provides a snapshot of the current context and evidence base to better understand the prevalence and characteristics of elder abuse in Queensland.</p> <p><b><i>Elder abuse, Queensland, September 2016: Report based on information sources from administrative collections (2017)</i></b></p> <p>This report has been published by the Queensland Government Department of Communities and was undertaken by the Queensland Government Statistician’s Office. It examines existing data and data collections held by Queensland Government agencies and funded services. It considers the availability, quality and usefulness of existing administrative and service level data sets for use in reporting on aspects of elder abuse.</p>
<p><b>SA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Prevalence of elder abuse in South Australia (2017)</i></b></p> <p>This report has been published by the University of South Australia as part of a project jointly funded by the Office for Ageing Well, SA Health. The report presents findings of a study that investigated how elder abuse data is collected by key government and non-government organisations. Among its main findings, the report highlights a lack of consistent processes to collected de-identified data.</p> <p><b><i>What keeps you safe—approaches to promote the safety of older Aboriginal people (Wardliparingga, SAHMRI)</i></b></p> <p>SAHMRI Wardliparingga Aboriginal Research Unit partnered with the Office for Ageing Well to research, develop and test resources in consultation with the Aboriginal community that will assist to promote the safety of older Aboriginal people. The approach included a Systematic Literature Review and consultations with Aboriginal community members and service providers working in aged care and related areas. This project provided opportunities for diverse Aboriginal people, Elders, experts and service providers to actively shape the recommended approaches and resources. The recommendations from this project will be used to shape elder abuse prevention responses for Aboriginal communities. Initial findings were presented at the 2018 AAG workshop.</p>

**WA*****Elder Abuse in Rural & Remote Communities: Social Policy, Prevention and Responses (2018).***

Curtin University of Technology has explored considerations in responding to elder abuse in regional and remote communities. Factors such as geographic isolation, service and support limitations, and issues around privacy and confidentiality may hinder efforts to respond to abuse of older people in regional and remote communities. This article reports the findings of an international scoping literature review focused on social policy, prevention, and service responses to elder abuse in rural and remote communities. It includes the findings from several Indigenous-specific initiatives. It highlights the importance of community consultation and the importance of considering local context in developing initiatives.

# Improving community awareness and access to information

Improving community awareness and access to information involves measures directly focused on improving understanding among older people and the broader community about what constitutes abuse and where to go to get further information, support and access to services.

This section provides a stocktake of:

- Awareness campaigns
- Educational tools and resources to raise awareness in the general community
- Community-based and peer-led initiatives, including prevention activities
- Awareness raising by statutory office holders
- Media

## Tips on where to find material in the publication

This section is a stocktake of awareness raising for older people and the general community, while:

- **Strengthening service responses—protocols, networks, training** covers material on workforce education and professional development
- **Planning for future decision-making**, covers material on preparing for decision-making in later years. It includes awareness raising and workforce development for older people, the general community, professions and community workers.

## Awareness Campaigns

This section covers major awareness campaigns about elder abuse.

In addition to activities to raise awareness about elder abuse, consultation with stakeholders indicates that many believe ageism contributes to abuse of older people. Raising awareness of ageism and the rights of older people contribute to preventing elder abuse. The International Day of Older Persons is celebrated on 1 October, and is day where communities around the world join together to promote the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by older persons.

In order to prevent elder abuse, many governments are increasing their focus on supporting the older person to age well. Australian, state and territory governments are supporting an array of initiatives to challenge negative stereotypes of ageing, to promote community connections, decrease social isolation and promote ageing well. For example, in South Australia measures to promote ageing well are a core aspect of that jurisdiction's approach to preventing elder abuse. State and Territory governments and others also use the creative arts to challenge stereotypes about ageing. One example is the Western Australian short film competition Life in Pictures funded as an initiative of the WA Department of Communities, Screenwest and the Revelation Film Festival. Non-government organisations are also active in combatting ageism. COTA organisations conduct activities under the *#RethinkAgeing* projects. The Benevolent Society and a coalition of more than 20 organisations who have joined together to fight ageism and age discrimination through the Campaign *EveryAGECounts*.

## ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

<p><b>Global, National</b></p>	<p><b><i>World Elder Abuse Awareness Day</i></b></p> <p>The United Nations General Assembly designated June 15 as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the annual day for acknowledging and raising awareness of the abuse and suffering experienced by older people. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the abuse and suffering experienced by older people and encourage appropriate action to combat elder abuse. Organisations and individuals acknowledge the day in many different ways, including poster campaigns, speaker events, and community events. In 2018 the theme was ‘Moving from awareness to action through a human rights-based approach’. A wide range of approaches are used to raise awareness of elder abuse, including declarations by Mayors committing to reduce elder abuse in the community.</p>
<p><b>NSW</b></p>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse ‘Is this you’</i></b></p> <p>On 15 June 2018 the NSW Government launched the NSW Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit awareness campaign. The campaign aims to call out common behaviours that constitute elder abuse, in the hope that perpetrators recognise their behaviours and make the necessary changes. The campaign also reaches out to victims to help them recognise whether abuse is affecting them personally, and to let them know that support is a phone call away.</p>
<p><b>Vic</b></p>	<p><b><i>Elder abuse campaign activities in Victoria</i></b></p> <p>The Victorian Government is raising awareness of elder abuse as an unacceptable form of family violence through diverse mediums to increase awareness across the state. For example, since 2017 the Victorian Government created an Elder Abuse Prevention Ambassador (see later section for further information). In 2018, Seniors Rights Victoria published a suite of prevention material in the form of three booklets: <i>Preventing Elder Abuse</i>; <i>Elder Abuse as Family Violence</i>; <i>Elder Abuse, Gender and Sexuality</i>. The Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria has developed a DVD <i>Within My Walls</i> to raise community awareness of elder abuse which is available in 12 languages (see later sections for more information).</p>
<p><b>Qld</b></p>	<p><b><i>‘There’s no excuse for elder abuse’</i></b></p> <p>Since 2010, the Queensland Government has run an annual elder abuse prevention campaign during the lead up to World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on 15 June. The theme ‘There’s no excuse for elder abuse’ was used from 2016 to 2018, highlighting the most common types of abuse, using the language commonly used to excuse elder abuse. The campaigns have used a range of print and electronic media to raise awareness.</p>

## ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

<b>SA</b>	<p><b><i>'Stop Elder Abuse'</i></b></p> <p>This annual campaign was launched in 2015 and uses digital, radio and print advertising across metropolitan and regional South Australia to raise awareness of the signs of elder abuse and directing people with concerns to call the SA Elder Abuse Prevention Phone Line Service. In addition to the general public, the 2016 campaign focused on the health, legal and financial sectors, in 2017, volunteers and carers, in 2018 on financial advisers and real estate agents, and in 2019 the campaign will target hairdressers and beauty therapists.</p>
<b>Tas</b>	<p><b><i>'Elder Abuse Is Not Okay'</i></b></p> <p>In 2014 the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services launched this campaign involving a television commercial and print media. The campaign sought to portray the message that elder abuse will not be tolerated and raised awareness of the Tasmanian Elder Abuse Helpline and website.</p>
<b>WA</b>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse posters and postcards</i></b></p> <p>In 2018, the Department of Communities updated posters and postcards that illustrate different forms of elder abuse, including depicting scenarios which humanise the stress that carers may be experiencing. The scenarios depicted in the posters are directed at an older person who may be experiencing elder abuse and the posters provide the Elder Abuse Helpline number.</p>

## Educational tools and resources to raise awareness in the general community

Most of the organisations mentioned in this publication provide information and advice about elder abuse on their websites and through other media. Some organisations have developed detailed tools and resources such as fact sheets, self-help resources, toolkits and video resources. Some organisations provide general information, while others provide specific information and advice about particular types of elder abuse.

A wide range of organisations use these resources to support awareness raising and prevention activities. For example legal assistance services and Public Trustees run education sessions on safeguarding financial affairs and transfer of wealth. These sessions may cover Wills, Guardian and Administration Orders, EPAs, EPGs, aged care considerations and managing family expectations regarding finances, assets and inheritance.

Given the plethora of resources, the table below gives insight into the range of topics addressed by these tools and resources, rather than listing individual resources or awareness raising and prevention activities.

TOPICS ADDRESSED IN EDUCATIONAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES	
<b>National</b>	<p><i>Elder Abuse Knowledge Hub (under development)</i></p> <p>The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department has allocated funding to establish an Elder Abuse Knowledge Hub (the Hub). In 2018, it funded EAAA to conduct a Feasibility Study into the Hub, including community consultation organisations and older people. In 2019, the Australian Government will seek to engage a suitably qualified organisation, or group of organisations, to establish the Hub.</p>
<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What constitutes elder abuse</li> <li>• Preventing Elder Abuse by staying active, healthy, connected, and in control</li> <li>• Elder Abuse As Family Violence</li> <li>• Elder Abuse, Gender and Sexuality</li> <li>• Signs of abuse</li> <li>• Risk factors for abuse</li> <li>• Where to seek help</li> <li>• Navigating conversations with someone you think may be experiencing abuse</li> <li>• Advice for older Australians on protecting themselves from elder abuse</li> <li>• Advice for older Australians on knowing and understanding their rights</li> <li>• Advice for older Australians on planning for later life decision-making</li> </ul>

## TOPICS ADDRESSED IN EDUCATIONAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES

<p><b>General</b> cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice for older Australians on how to advocate for themselves and others</li> <li>• Legal issues affecting older people</li> <li>• Making, changing and revoking legal documents such as wills, enduring powers of attorney and enduring guardianships/advance care directives</li> <li>• Making decisions about aged care</li> <li>• Developing a safety plan</li> <li>• Understanding issues affecting older Indigenous Australians</li> <li>• Understanding issues affecting older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds</li> <li>• Understanding issues affecting older people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex</li> <li>• Understanding issues affecting older people who are carers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical abuse</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What constitutes physical abuse</li> <li>• Advice for older Australians on preventing physical abuse</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sexual abuse</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What constitutes sexual abuse</li> <li>• Myths about older people and sexual abuse</li> <li>• Advice for older Australians on preventing sexual abuse</li> <li>• Advice for family and friends who suspect an older person has been sexually assaulted or to whom an older person has disclosed sexual assault</li> </ul>
<p><b>Psychological abuse</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What constitutes psychological and emotional abuse</li> <li>• Advice for older Australians on preventing psychological abuse</li> </ul>



## TOPICS ADDRESSED IN EDUCATIONAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES

### **Financial abuse**

- What constitutes financial abuse
- Advice for older Australians on preventing financial abuse
- Understanding the risks and implications associated with providing financial assistance (including loaning or gifting money or other assets) to family members
- Protecting financial interests for older people who are moving in with family
- Understanding the risks and implications of housing arrangements on the age pension
- Navigating conversations about financial matters with family members
- Navigating relationships with adult children living at home

### **Neglect**

- What constitutes neglect
- Advice for older Australians on preventing neglect

## Community-based and peer-led initiatives

Community-based initiatives are tailored to local contexts and needs, and are commonly supported by community organisations and local governments. There are many different ways of delivering community based and peer-led initiatives. The following list is incomplete, but gives an insight into some different types of community-based and peer-led activities.

### COMMUNITY-BASED AND PEER-LED INITIATIVES

#### Australia

##### ***Community legal education***

Legal assistance services have developed a range of approaches to community legal education to raise awareness among older people about options to address elder abuse. For example *Piano Forte* is a program for older people and their families that involves a screening of a video of a play that explores issues around financial abuse and enduring powers of attorney, and a panel discussion between the audience, and lawyers and seniors rights experts. *Piano Forte* has been presented at community theatres across the Sunshine Coast and at public libraries in NSW. In another activity, *Bingo*, the Community Legal Centre educator initiates a discussion about elder abuse after participants mark off warning signs of elder abuse on a 'bingo card'. *Borrowers Beware* was community legal education delivered via community radio to educate Arabic and South Eastern European older people about using their homes as security for loans obtained for the benefit of a family member.

##### ***Celebrate Ageing***

*Celebrate Ageing* is a social enterprise which challenges ageism, builds respect and prevents sexual abuse of older women. Initiatives include the Elder Leadership Academy, Embolden, The Museum of Love, Alice's Garage and The Power Project campaign. The Power Project Campaign supports older women to respond to sexual abuse, and to educate their families, friends and service providers about effective responses. Celebrate Ageing uses Facebook and other social media to raise awareness of elder abuse and challenge ageism.

#### NSW

##### ***City of Sydney monthly referral hubs***

In a partnership between the City of Sydney and the Elder Abuse NSW Helpline and Resource Centre, free monthly hubs in Sydney's central districts aim to support older people in need of assistance. The monthly referral hubs are located at Ultimo Community Centre and Regional Murphy Centre in Potts Point.

##### ***Community Initiative (Wollongong Police District and Illawarra Taxi Network)***

This partnership is designed to help identify and prevent instances of elder abuse in the community. Taxis are a primary transport option for older people and taxi drivers may have one-on-one conversations and develop relationships of trust with their passengers. This initiative provides information and training to help taxi drivers identify signs of abuse and mistreatment and direction on where to seek information and assistance.

## COMMUNITY-BASED AND PEER-LED INITIATIVES

**Vic**

### ***Seniors Rights Victoria***

Seniors Rights Victoria supports community education to older Victorians on issues relating to elder abuse, including prevention, options for action and legal issues. Peer educators and trainers work with community groups to raise awareness of elder abuse. Senior Rights Victoria has developed a wide range of resources on elder abuse, and established partnerships with many organisations. During 2018, Seniors Rights Victoria partnered with the Country Women’s Association to raise awareness about elder abuse. In 2019, the service will work in consultation to develop a comprehensive booklet to improve support to families and friends who are concerned that an older person is being abused.

### ***Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, with Seniors Rights Victoria***

The council coordinates a state-wide project, in partnership with Seniors Rights Victoria, to support older culturally and linguistically diverse Victorians affected by abuse. Activities have included the development of appropriate community education strategies to build the capacity of bilingual peer educators and delivery of community education programs, and capacity building in the service sector. Resources available in multiple languages include brochures, community education kits and a DVD *Within My Walls* to raise community awareness of elder abuse. The DVD has been translated into 12 languages—Turkish, Greek, Chinese, Macedonian, Hindi, Punjabi, Polish, Filipino, Russian, Serbian, Croatian and Vietnamese.

### ***Peer Support Initiatives***

Men’s Sheds are a space where men can engage in activities and participate in community-led initiatives to promote health and wellbeing. For example, in Victoria the *Sebastopol Men’s Shed* and the *Ballarat University of the Third Age* are partners in a program to promote discussion about elder abuse and provide peer support.

### ***Carers Victoria***

Carers Victoria is developing and implementing a suite of materials and strategies targeting primary and secondary carers with the aim of preventing or de-escalating elder abuse.

**Qld**

### ***Seniors Creating Change (Townsville Community Legal Centre)***

Seniors Creating Change is a community development initiative promoting social connection and raising awareness of elder abuse through arts-based activities in nursing homes and community settings. It is a grassroots group focused on seniors empowering themselves by calling for an end to elder abuse. The group sings in public places to raise awareness of the root causes of ageism and social isolation.

## COMMUNITY-BASED AND PEER-LED INITIATIVES

**Qld** cont.

### ***Ageing Diversely (EAPU)***

EAPU undertook the Ageing Diversely project to prevent and raise awareness of elder abuse among culturally diverse communities. The project produced a number of resources to support working with culturally diverse communities, including videos in Auslan and other languages.

### ***Collaborative community education (Caxton Community Legal Centre)***

Caxton Community Legal Centre has developed a model of collaborative community education implemented in partnership with a range of agencies including Queensland Police and the Office of the Public Guardian. Part of this model includes role plays of various elder abuse scenarios, which provide a starting point for discussions between older people and service providers.

**SA**

### ***Living a Positive Life Toolkit and other activities***

ARAS, in partnership with Office for Ageing Well, has developed “Living a Positive Life Toolkit” to begin conversations with older people about the ways in which staying active and engaged, as we age, can help safeguard against the risk of abuse. Key messages include: stay active, stay healthy, stay connected and stay in control. Two Toolkits are available: one for non-Aboriginal communities and one specifically for Aboriginal Elders. Community services can use this Toolkit to start conversations with their older clients/customers about how they can get involved in activities to maintain wellbeing and safety.

ARAS receives funding from Office for Ageing Well, SA Health to deliver the ARAS Elder Abuse Prevention Program, focusing on raising awareness about living a positive life for older Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

### ***Knowing your Rights for older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds***

Office for Ageing Well is partnering with the Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia and a range of ethno-specific ageing service providers to raise awareness of the rights of older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Key messages involve raising awareness about the types and signs of elder abuse and where to get information and support, and have been developed in partnership with a variety of cultural groups and delivered by respected community leaders or champions including through ethnic radio. The ARAS Aboriginal Advocacy Program and the Council of Aboriginal Elders South Australia has co-designed an elder abuse prevention approach. It includes mentoring camps for Aboriginal youth and Elders from urban, rural and remote communities which aim to prevent elder abuse by educating disengaged young people about the tradition of respecting their Elders and the development of culturally appropriate resources.

### ***Ageing Well Grants to Diverse Communities***

Office for Ageing Well partners with and Funds a range of organisations including Aged Rights Advocacy Service, Multicultural Communities Council of SA Greek, Italian and Polish service providers, and COTA to provide information and awareness raising about safeguarding information, rights and elder abuse to Aboriginal, CALD and LGBTI communities using trusted networks.

## COMMUNITY-BASED AND PEER-LED INITIATIVES

**WA**

***Older People's Peer Education Scheme (OPPES) (Northern Suburbs CLC and Southern Communities Advocacy Legal and Education Service CLC)***

Two CLCs deliver a peer education scheme across five areas in northern and southern Perth. The scheme trains older volunteers to work with individuals, seniors groups and organisations to raise awareness about the risks of elder abuse and to provide information and strategies to prevent abuse happening to them. 'Purple Road' is a creative project, led by OPPES, to raise awareness of elder abuse which involves crocheting flowers to add to a growing 'road'; each flower represents an older person's experience of elder abuse.

**Tas**

***'You're Worth It' (COTA Tasmania)***

This education program uses trained volunteer peer educators to attend community events and visit community organisations to educate community members about financial elder abuse. COTA Tasmania also provides elder abuse awareness and prevention information sessions for home care workers and other staff and volunteers who come into contact with older people in the community.

## Awareness raising by Office Holders

Office holders play an important role in raising awareness of abuse of older people, and undertake work to support peer and community organisations.

STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY OFFICE HOLDERS	
<b>National</b>	<p><b><i>Commonwealth Age Discrimination Commissioner</i></b></p> <p>In 2004 Australia introduced the <i>Age Discrimination Act 2004</i> (Cth) and in 2009 created the first-ever role of Age Discrimination Commissioner, making it one of the earliest countries to address age discrimination formally. Australia has had two Age Discrimination Commissioners, the Hon Susan Ryan AO (whose term as Aged and Disability Discrimination Commissioner was 2011-16) and the Hon Dr Kay Patterson AO (whose term commenced in July 2016). Both Commissioners have played a prominent role in raising awareness of elder abuse and ageism. Dr Patterson undertakes a wide range of activities to raise awareness about how to recognise and address elder abuse.</p>
<b>Vic</b>	<p><b><i>Commissioner for Senior Victorians and Ambassador for Elder Abuse Prevention</i></b></p> <p>In 2013, the Victorian Government established the position of Commissioner for Senior Victorians, which is held by Mr Gerard Mansour. In 2017, the Victorian Government appointed Mr Mansour as the Ambassador for Elder Abuse Prevention. The Ambassador's role is to raise community awareness of: elder abuse and available support options for those at risk; the full range of key prevention approaches available to older people, including considerations in making enduring powers of attorney; to provide advice on a comprehensive response to the prevention of elder abuse as part of the Victorian Government's family violence reform agenda; and to represent the interests of older people in the Government's family violence prevention and reform agendas.</p>
<b>States and Territories</b>	<p>There are a range of other State and Territory statutory officer holders who play a role in raising awareness of elder abuse and ageism as part of their broader functions. These include Anti-Discrimination Commissioners and Public Advocates-Guardians. Their functions are discussed in a later section of this report.</p>

## Media

Australia's media sector plays a role in raising awareness of abuse of older people by publishing news stories, magazines, movies, and television and radio programs. For instance, in 2018 the Australian Women's Weekly ran a two part investigative feature on elder abuse, which provided advice on how to recognise elder abuse and advice on where to seek help. Materials, such as podcasts, are available online long after they are first produced and can be accessed by a wide audience. For example, podcasts on elder abuse have been produced by ABC Radio National, ABC local radio stations and SBS, as well as by other broadcasters.

The web enables a wide array of organisations to become creators of media content. Radio COTA Queensland produces a weekly podcast on issues affecting older people and has produced several episodes on elder abuse. Private sector organisations are also using media to raise awareness of elder abuse. For example, Unisuper's *Super Informed Radio* produced a podcast on elder abuse. Seniors Rights Services produced videos and resources, along with resource sheets, as lasting outcomes from the 2018 Elder Abuse Conference *Together Making Change*.

Media creates opportunities to engage with diverse communities, including through ethnic radio stations and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media sector. For example, in August 2018 the Australian Government launched the *Speak My Language* radio project, supported by the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW, Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland, Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, Diversicare, NEMBC and SBS Radio. *Speak My Language* provides a national coordinated approach to providing aged care information, produced with partnership with culturally and linguistically diverse ethnic radio and the aged care sector. It is producing online tools, podcasts and learning guides. Material is broadcast in over 25 languages across 80 ethnic radio stations. It is planned that programs will be produced on elder abuse.

# Strengthening service responses

## SERVICES

Strengthening services involves ensuring the right support services are in place to assist older people experiencing or those at risk of abuse within a relationship of trust.

This section provides a stocktake of community sector organisations:

- Telephone lines
- Elder abuse prevention and resource units
- Trials of integrated models
- Legal assistance services
- Family inclusive services
- Health-justice partnerships
- Individual advocacy.

### **Tips on where to find material in the publication**

This section is a stocktake of community sector services which focus on providing support to older people affected by abuse as one of their primary areas of delivery.

The next section, **Strengthening service responses—protocols, networks, training**, outlines how other services are involved in addressing elder abuse, including through fostering partnerships and providing workforce education and professional development.

**Strengthening safeguards for vulnerable adults**—covers the role of statutory authorities such as Public Advocates-Guardians and Tribunals, and complaints authorities in supporting older people.

Over the past decade, a range of community services across different sectors have developed specialised service offerings to assist older people at risk or experiencing elder abuse. These services include: telephone lines, elder abuse prevention and resource units, trials of integrated models of support; legal assistance; collaborative practice models where lawyers and social workers and advocates work together to support the older person; family inclusive services providing mediation, counselling and referrals for various family members, including the older person; health justice partnerships; and advocacy services. Services may make referrals to other forms of assistance, and some may play a role in coordinating that assistance for the older person and their family.



## Telephone lines

In March 2019, the Commonwealth, state and territory governments established a national, free call number **1800 ELDERHelp** which redirects callers to a state and territory telephone line. It is expected that a single national number will make it easier for people across Australia to find a path to information and advice.

The elder abuse telephone lines in each state and territory provide confidential advice and referrals. In most jurisdictions, telephone lines are run by community based organisations. In South Australia, the Elder Abuse Prevention Phone Line Service is funded by SA Health and delivered by the Office for Ageing Well. The service provides confidential advice, support and referrals to people with concerns about elder abuse. The Phone Line service will be the entry point to the new South Australia Adult Safeguarding Unit once it commences in October 2019.

ELDER ABUSE TELEPHONE LINES		
<b>National</b>	<b>1800 ELDERHelp (1800 353 374)</b> a national, free call number, which redirects callers from anywhere in Australia to a state or territory telephone line for confidential information, advice and referrals about elder abuse.	
<b>NSW</b>	<b>1800 628 221</b> (Mon–Fri 8:30am–5:00pm)	Operated by the Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit
<b>Vic</b>	<b>1300 368 821</b> (Mon–Fri 10:00am–5:00pm)	Operated by Seniors Rights Victoria
<b>Qld</b>	<b>1300 651 192</b> (Mon–Fri 9:00am–5:00pm)	Operated by the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit
<b>SA</b>	<b>1800 372 310</b> (Mon–Fri 9:00am–5:00pm)	Operated by Office for Ageing Well, SA Health
<b>WA</b>	<b>1300 724 679</b> (Mon–Fri 8:30am–4:30pm)	Operated by Advocare Inc.
<b>Tas</b>	<b>1800 441 169</b> (Mon–Fri 9:00am–5:00pm)	Operated by Advocacy Tasmania Inc.
<b>NT</b>	<b>1800 037 072</b> (Mon–Fri 9:00am–4:00pm)	Operated by Darwin Community Legal Service ** please note this number will change by mid 2019
<b>ACT</b>	<b>(02) 6243 3436</b> (Mon–Fri 9:00am–4:00pm)	Operated by Older Persons ACT Legal Service

## Elder abuse prevention and resource units

The New South Wales and Queensland Governments have established elder abuse prevention and resource units. While not formally established as resource units, Seniors Rights Victoria (Vic), Advocare (WA) and ARAS (SA) perform a number of similar roles in those states.

ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION AND RESOURCE UNITS	
<b>NSW</b>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse Helpline &amp; Resource Unit</i></b></p> <p>Elder Abuse Helpline &amp; Resource Unit (EAHRU) is under the auspices of the Department of Family and Community Services and operated by Catholic Healthcare Limited. Established in 2013 as part of the <i>New South Wales Ageing Strategy</i>, EAHRU runs the state-wide helpline and information and resource website, develops prevention and support resources, such as the New South Wales Elder Abuse Toolkit, and has established a range of interagency partnerships, known as Elder Abuse Collaboratives, to support localised responses to elder abuse. EAHRU provides the helpline, training, education and awareness activities for professionals and community members including strategic planning activities to understand needs and develop responses to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD communities. The Unit is trialing complex case coordination (see next section).</p> <p>It has developed a set of recommendations for communicating with older people from CALD backgrounds as part of its elder abuse toolkit. EAHRU also delivers train the trainer workshops for CALD workers on how to present the community PowerPoint resource <i>Everyone deserves respect—understanding your rights, and how to stay safe</i> to older people in their communities currently translated into 16 languages. It has also developed a fold out pocket guide aimed at CALD individuals or individuals with low literacy skills. Written in simple English, and including pictures and a case study, it gives details about the helpline and access to interpreters in 24 languages.</p>
<b>Qld</b>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse Prevention Unit</i></b></p> <p>The Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU) is funded by the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors and operated by UnitingCare Queensland. Established in 1997 in response to the <i>Report of the Project on Abuse of Older People</i>, EAPU runs the state-wide helpline and information and resource website, develops resources, and runs community education and training to raise awareness and understanding of elder abuse. The EAPU also supports the development of networks in regional areas.</p>

## Trials of integrated models

Some governments are trialling integrated models of care to support people affected by elder abuse.

TRIAL MODELS OF INTEGRATED SERVICES	
<b>Locations in each state and territory</b>	<p><b><i>Protecting the Rights of Older Australians—Elder Abuse Service Trials</i></b></p> <p>Between 2019 and 2022 the Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department is trialling five Specialist elder abuse units, three Health justice partnerships and four Case management and mediation service. Offers have been made to 11 organisations to participate in the trial. Details about each funding offer are in the following sections.</p>
<b>NSW</b>	<p><b><i>Complex Case Coordination</i></b></p> <p>In February 2018 the Minister for Ageing, the Hon. Tanya Davies MP, announced funding to trial the use of case workers to assist in coordinating services to address elder abuse. The trial, based at the EAHRU, will use a case worker to manage complex elder abuse cases and coordinate services with police, Family and Community Services, health and disability services, legal assistance services and CALD organisations.</p> <p><b><i>Justice Connect and EAHRU Streamline Referral Project</i></b></p> <p>This partnership between the EAHRU and Justice connect streamlines the way in which callers to the EAHRU with legal issues are referred to appropriate services, including pro bono lawyers, to receive legal advice. The project connects calls to pro bono lawyers and other legal services where appropriate. The project includes legal referrals to family and friends of the older person.</p>

**Vic*****Integrated Model of Care for Responding to Suspected Elder Abuse***

The Victorian Government is trialling an Integrated Model of Care for Responding to Suspected Elder Abuse at five sites: Melbourne Health, Monash Health, Latrobe Community Health Service, Western Health and Peninsula Health. The Integrated model of care aims to strengthen elder abuse responses and support within Victorian health services by creating multiple entry points for older people and their carers and families to access specialist support services to address suspected elder abuse. The integrated model of care consists of four components (1) workforce development, (2) a Liaison Officer—elder abuse prevention and response (3) counselling and mediation services (including financial counselling) and (4) an elder abuse prevention network. The liaison officers provide a specialist clinical advice and consultancy regarding complex discharge decisions for older people at risk of or experiencing elder abuse. They also provide secondary consultation to services requiring advice and referral on elder abuse cases across the catchment area.

The government is funding Better Place Australia and a consortium led by Sunbury Community Health to provide family inclusive counselling and mediation (including financial counselling) at the trial health services. The counselling services offer a therapeutic option/pathway for older people and their carers and families, helping prevent escalation of cases to the legal system. An elder abuse prevention network is a membership-based group of organisations, including community groups, organisations or businesses that work with or provide services to older people and others in their communities. The networks mobilise local communities and community organisations to identify signs of abuse, help older victims of abuse, and deter perpetrators.

***Support and Safety Hubs (The Orange Door)***

In Victoria, elder abuse is addressed within a family violence framework. The establishment of the Support and Safety Hubs was a key recommendation of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence. The initial roll-out of launch sites is in Barwon, Bayside Peninsula, Mallee and Norther Eastern Melbourne.

## Legal assistance services

Elder abuse can lead to complex legal problems in areas including age discrimination, grand-parenting rights, family arrangements, wills and estates, and guardianships and powers of attorney. Access to legal information, advice and casework services can prevent abuse, help to identify potential abuse early, prevent abuse from escalating and assist the older person to obtain some redress.

All states and territories have services that provide legal assistance on matters affecting older Australians. In each state and territory, there is at least one legal assistance service that has developed specialised expertise in elder abuse. Recognising the complexity of both abusive behaviours and elder law, a number of different approaches have been used to develop targeted services which meet clients' complex needs. These include developing elder abuse expertise and implementing specialist elder abuse responses within existing services. Lawyer-Social worker/advocate partnerships are an example of an interdisciplinary model of support for older people seeking help.

In addition to government funded legal assistance services, some commercial law firms have specialist expertise in elder law. In some states and territories there are formal approaches to coordinate referrals for pro bono assistance for older people affected by elder abuse. Elder law covers a wide range of matters including: enduring powers of attorney and advanced care directives; wills, succession and probate law; family agreements concerning gifts, housing agreements, loan guarantees and reverse mortgages, including the interaction with Centrelink entitlements; superannuation, including-self managed superannuation funds, and interactions with enduring powers of attorney; contracts for aged care and retirement villages; and aged discrimination and human rights.

### LEGAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

#### **National, multiple organisations in each state and territory**

#### ***Legal Aid Commissions***

In each state and territory, legal aid commissions deliver a wide range of legal assistance services in criminal, family and civil law matters. Some legal assistance is available free-of-charge to everyone. Legal Aid delivers legal services in partnership with the private legal profession through grants of legal aid. Legal Aid Commissions are funded by state and territory governments, which are responsible for administering Commonwealth funding provided via the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services.

#### ***Community Legal Centres***

Community Legal Centres (CLCs) are independent, community-managed not-for-profit services that provide legal information, advice and casework to vulnerable and disadvantaged community members and those with special needs. There are around 200 CLCs across Australia. The Older Persons Legal Services Network (OPLS) is a network of CLCs across Australia which have expertise in seniors' rights issues and elder law, and undertake advocacy for the rights of older people in Australia.

Other CLCs specialise in women's legal issues, family violence, financial services and consumer credit, and social security rights, and may also be an appropriate referral source in some instances of elder abuse. CLCs are funded by state and territory governments, which are responsible for administering Commonwealth funding provided via the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services.

## LEGAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

**National, multiple organisations in each state and territory**  
cont.

### ***National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS)***

There are seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services; one in each state and territory and one which provides services in both NSW and the ACT. The Commonwealth provides funding to NATSILS through direct grant agreements to deliver legal services from 70 permanent locations nationally.

### ***Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Forum***

The Forum is comprised of fourteen member organisations which provide legal service and support, primarily to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women facing family violence. The Commonwealth provides funding to member organisations through direct grant agreements.

**NSW**

### ***Legal Aid New South Wales Older Persons' Legal and Education Program***

Legal Aid NSW provides a state wide service supporting older people through advice, assistance, advocacy, representation, referral and education. It has developed extensive awareness raising resources on elder abuse, and partners with Seniors Rights Service to deliver the Older Persons' Legal and Education Program.

### ***Legal Aid New South Wales—Specialist Elder Abuse Unit (to be established during second quarter of 2019)***

The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department has made an offer to Legal Aid New South Wales to deliver a Specialist Elder Abuse Unit on the Central Coast. The Unit builds on existing capacity in Legal Aid NSW, and will provide integrated legal, social work and financial counselling. The Unit will be staffed by solicitors, a social worker, a financial counsellor and a legal support officer, and will build and develop partnerships.

### ***Seniors Rights Service Older Persons' Legal Service***

Seniors Rights Service is a CLC which offers legal advice, assistance, referral and education to people over 60, and also provides advocacy services as part of the Older Person's Advocacy Network (OPAN). It runs an extensive program of rights-based events and visits 300 aged-care facilities a year. Seniors Rights Service has undertaken a number of activities to address elder abuse awareness among CALD communities. These include: a radio campaign to Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian and Arabic communities to raise awareness about gifting the family home; peer education training for CALD community workers; developing playing cards which included legal advice on the back for women in Arabic communities; and Paulo Freire Methods to address experiences of 'loss of respect at home' by older people from South Asian Backgrounds. Seniors Rights Services also works with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and intersex community, including participating in Mardi Gras. It also provides services and outreach into regional areas in New South Wales.

**NSW** cont.

***CLCs supporting older clients experiencing elder abuse***

Other CLCs (for example, Elizabeth Evatt, Newcastle, Macarthur, Marrickville, Northern Rivers, and Mid-North Coast, Shoalcoast, South West Sydney, Western NSW) also provide services on a wide range of matters concerning older people including elder abuse. They provide legal advice, community legal education, participate in networks, and develop partnerships and try to assist with client’s non-legal needs.

***Justice Connect Seniors Law Program***

Justice Connect is a not-for-profit organisation that acts to change unfair laws and systems and works with a network of pro-bono lawyers around Australia to connect people with legal assistance and empower people with knowledge to navigate legal systems. Justice Connect Seniors Law Program provides free legal advice and support in relation to elder abuse and other legal issues associated with ageing.

**Vic**

***Seniors Rights Victoria***

Seniors Rights Victoria provides a specialist elder abuse service, providing both legal assistance and advocacy on elder abuse and also runs the Statewide Elder Abuse Helpline. Senior Rights Victoria has developed a practice model where lawyers and advocates work together. It provides support for Victorian elder abuse prevention network and convenes the bi-monthly Elder Abuse roundtable. It is a member of many partnerships and has developed many resources on elder abuse. Seniors Rights Victoria works with culturally and linguistically diverse communities (see section of work with the Ethnic Community Council of Victoria) and delivers community education programs for older people from Indigenous backgrounds. For example, in collaboration with Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative it developed a series of videos on elder abuse, with a particular focus on physical and financial abuse.

***Eastern Community Legal Centre Elder Abuse Program***

The program provides legal advice and support to older people and their families when elder abuse is present or suspected, as well as providing assistance and referrals for broader related issues such as financial counselling and housing issues. Eastern CLC convenes the Eastern Elder Abuse Network. It undertakes community legal education, has developed elder abuse toolkits, worked with CALD communities to raise awareness of elder abuse through the ‘Matter of Trust’ project, and works with GPs and hospitals.

**Vic** cont.

***Eastern Community Legal Centre—Specialist Elder Abuse Unit and Health Justice Partnership*** (to be established during second quarter of 2019)

The Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department has made an offer to the Eastern Community Legal Centre to deliver a Specialist Elder Abuse Unit and Health Justice Partnership covering the Eastern Melbourne Metropolitan regions. The Unit will be based at the ECLC Boronia site and outreach to six local government catchments (Boroondara, Manningham, Whitehorse, Maroondah, Knox, Yarra Ranges and parts of Monash). The Unit builds on capacity in ECLC and will be staffed by lawyers, advocate-social worker, financial counsellor and intake worker. It will work closely with the Eastern Elder Abuse Network. Please also see the section on Health Justice Partnerships.

***Justice Connect Seniors Law Program***

The program provides free legal advice and support in relation to elder abuse and other legal issues associated with ageing.

***Other Victorian CLCs***

While not their primary area of focus, other Victorian CLCs who undertake case work on elder abuse include Barwon CLC, Mental Health Legal Centre, the Peninsula CLC, the Consumer Action Law Centre, Goulburn Valley CLC, Inner Melbourne CLC and Northern CLC. Goulburn Valley partners with Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative and also works with culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the Shepparton area. The Northern CLC has relationships with many Arabic, Assyrian/ Chaldean, Bhutanese, Italian, Greek, Nepali and Punjabi communities and organisations. Inner Melbourne CLC is one of the participants in the trial of the Integrated Model of Care with Royal Melbourne Hospital (see section of Coordinated Care).

**Qld**

***Seniors Legal and Support Services***

Queensland has ten seniors legal and support services providing specialist services for older people experiencing elder abuse, mistreatment or financial exploitation. The services provide psychosocial assessments, safety planning, counselling, assisting with negotiations to recover money/assets, case planning and access to legal advice. Support includes the provision of information and referrals, telephone advice, outreach and home visits. Five of these services (Brisbane, Cairns, Fraser Coast, Toowoomba, Townsville) operate from community legal centres and are staffed by social workers, counsellors and lawyers working together in multi-disciplinary teams to provide an integrated service offering. In 2018, Relationships Australia was funded to provide five additional seniors legal and support services (see next section).

***Lawright***

While not directly focused on elder abuse, Lawright provides a range of assistance concerning elder abuse via the Health Advocacy Legal Clinic, Pro Bono Connect Service, the State Courts Self Representation Service, the QCAT Self Representation Service and the QCAT Duty Lawyer Service.

***Legal Aid Queensland***

Legal Aid Queensland provides a range of legal advice, duty lawyer and legal representation services to financially disadvantaged older Queenslanders in the areas of family and domestic violence, consumer rights, family law, and discrimination.



## LEGAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

**SA**

### ***Legal Services Commission of South Australia***

The Legal Services Commission (LCS) provides free legal advice, community education and legal representation. Older people are one of four priority target groups for the community legal education program about a range of issues affecting older people including preventing abuse, and planning ahead instruments such as advance care directives, wills, and enduring powers of attorney. The LSC is a member of APEA and has a close working relationship with SA's Elder Abuse Prevention Phone Line Service.

### ***Uniting Communities Law Centre—Specialist Elder Abuse Unit (expected to be established during second quarter of 2019)***

The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department has made an offer to the Uniting Communities Law Centre to deliver a Specialist Elder Abuse Unit based in the Adelaide metropolitan area, also providing services from Smithfield and Christies Beach hubs. The team will include a lawyer and social worker. The Unit will build on capacity already existing in the Uniting Communities Law Centre, for instance in the area of consumer credit law, mediation and legal clinics. The Unit will provide legal support services within the Adelaide metropolitan area. The social worker will develop individualised case plans for older people and facilitate partnerships to provide holistic services.

**WA**

### ***Northern Suburbs CLC Older Peoples Rights Service***

Northern Suburbs CLC runs the Older Peoples Rights Service in partnership with Advocare. Using a social worker-lawyer intervention model, it provides legal assistance and social work services to people aged 60 years and above and Indigenous people 50 years and above across metropolitan Perth who are at risk of or experiencing elder abuse. In addition to legal assistance and advocacy, it provides community legal education, runs a peer education scheme, and runs The Seniors Register where trained volunteers regularly telephone people to check on people considered to be at risk. Northern Suburbs CLC operates from Southern Communities Advocacy and Legal Education Service (SCALES) once a month to provide outreach services on elder abuse.

### ***Seniors Rights and Advocacy Service***

Legal Aid WA has established the Seniors Rights and Advocacy Service (SRAS) as a specialist legal service in the Civil Law Division. SRAS seeks to help people affected by elder abuse and safeguard the rights of older Western Australians. The service provides free legal advice and assistance to older people who have experienced elder abuse or who are at risk of experiencing elder abuse; representation in certain guardianship and administration matters in the State Administrative Tribunal (SAT); coordination and triage of elder abuse services provided across all practice areas at Legal Aid WA, including civil law, family law, regional offices and intake areas; mediation or dispute resolution of suitable matters; referral for pro bono assistance of potential litigation matters; information sessions and community legal education; enhanced referral pathways and linkages with a wide range of community and local government agencies. The types of matters that LAWA can provide advice and assistance include planning for the future, providing legal assistance when someone lacks decision-making capacity, family disputes, granny flats and moving in with family, family law and issues involving grandchildren, and protection from violence or abuse.

## LEGAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

**WA** cont.

***Kimberley Community Legal Services—Specialist Elder Abuse Unit*** (expected to be established during second quarter of 2019)

The Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department has made an offer to the Kimberley Community Legal Services to deliver Australia’s first elder abuse specialist service tailored to the needs of remote Aboriginal communities. It will deliver legal and support services from Kununurra and Broome. Building on the service’s integrated support model for family violence, it will deliver the service in partnership with Aboriginal health services. It will undertake legal outreach at medical facilities, and coordinate support for shared clients. Teams will include client advocates, a lawyer, financial counsellor, health worker and others as needed. It will also develop a campaign to attempt to change community norms concerning “humbugging” (financial abuse of older Aboriginal people).

**Tas**

***Older Person’s Legal Service (OPLS)—Legal Aid Tas***

The Older People’s Legal Service (OPLS) provides free legal advice and assistance to people in Tasmania aged 65 and over on any elder law matter including preventing and responding to abuse. OPLS can be accessed by phone, video link, or face to face at Legal Aid’s offices in Burnie, Devonport, Hobart and Launceston. OPLS works with COTA Tasmania, the Tasmanian Elder Abuse Help Line and Relationships Australia to provide a wraparound service including clinics in the community. Legal Aid has a video phone service in some rural and remote towns so that older people don’t need to travel to the cities. Legal Aid provides representation at Guardianship Board hearings and has other specialist units that provide representation on Safe at Home, family, criminal and civil matters. OPLS also runs community and service provider education sessions on Legalities for Seniors.

***Legal Aid Tasmania—Specialist Elder Abuse Unit*** (expected to be established during second quarter of 2019)

The Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department has made an offer to the Legal Aid Tasmania to expand delivery of specialist elder abuse legal prevention and response services in the South, North and North West of Tasmania. Building on Legal Aid’s existing Older People’s Legal Service, the funding will be used to add social work services and employ more lawyers to expand legal support services. The service aims to maintain and build on current collaborations with COTA Tasmania, the Tasmanian Elder Abuse Help Line, Advocacy Tasmania and Relationships Australia.

## LEGAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

### NT

#### ***Darwin Community Legal Service Seniors and Disability Rights Service***

Darwin Community Legal Service is a multi-disciplinary practice, incorporating a CLC and OPAN advocates. It runs a specialised Seniors and Disability Rights Service which provides legal advice and assistance to older people about their rights, particularly in relation to aged care services. The Seniors and Disability Rights Service is based in Darwin but regularly undertakes outreach to other locations across the Territory. It established an Elder Abuse Information Line in 2014. The Northern Territory Government has provided short term funding for the Elder Abuse Project. It has researched training requirements, developed factsheets, and provided workshops to providers in regional centres.

#### ***NT Legal Aid, NAAJA, Indigenous Family Violence Women's Legal Services, the Central Australian Women's Legal Service (CAWLS), Top End Women's Legal Service (TEWLS) and Royal Darwin Hospital Health Justice Partnership***

While not primarily focused on elder abuse, these legal assistance services can provide assistance to older people experiencing abuse.

### ACT

#### ***Older Persons ACT Legal Service—Legal Aid ACT***

Established within Legal Aid ACT, Older Persons ACT Legal Service (OPALS) is a specialist service which provides legal assistance to older people on issues including elder abuse, guardianship, enduring powers and financial arrangements with family members. It provides a flexible service delivery model which includes provision of legal advice, advocating with family or services, mediation, referrals and representation at court proceedings. Legal Aid also provides the Canberra Hospital Outreach service to connect Legal Aid ACT with vulnerable clients at the hospital experiencing abuse. The broader services and expertise of Legal Aid ACT are also available to older people.

## Family inclusive services

Family relationship and mediation services provide information, counselling and dispute resolution services to help families work together to overcome differences and respectfully resolve conflict. For older people and their families, these family inclusive services can assist in preventing or resolving family conflict, planning for the future and making decisions that protect the interests, rights and safety of all family members. Family mediation services can provide a mechanism for addressing concerns when a family member is worried about emerging abuse dynamics within the broader family circle and where an older person may be reluctant to seek help. Other family inclusive services are part of trial models of coordinated care funded by the Commonwealth and Victorian governments (see earlier section).

### FAMILY INCLUSIVE SERVICES

#### Multiple locations across Australia, including in each state and territory

#### *Relationships Australia—Elder Relationships Service*

Since 2016, Relationships Australia has developed the Elder Relationships Service as part of its general service offering. The service provides therapeutic family counselling and mediation to assist older people and their families to prevent or resolve family conflict, plan for the future, resolve differences in ways that improve their relationships, and make decisions that protect the interests, rights and safety of all family members.

Relationships Australia has been building the capacity of staff across 120 Relationships Australia service outlets to provide the Elder Relationships Service, and currently offers the Elder Relationships Service in over 35 locations. Relationship Australia’s Elder Relationships Service website provides up to date information for all service locations providing the elder relationships service.

The model includes case management and meetings facilitated by mediators and counsellors. Case management and facilitated meetings may involve the older person, family members, support people and other parties involved in a conflict, or who need to be brought together to make challenging family decisions. As part of developing the Elder Relationships Service, Relationship Australia has been trialling several Elder Abuse Screening and Assessment Tools, and is also exploring the use of other universal safety and wellbeing screening tools (such as the Detection of Overall Risk Screen). They are also providing accredited training to staff on Elder Mediation. Relationships Australia is continuing to prototype and develop the Elder Relationships Service model, including: testing different ways to triage clients; developing clinical models to supervise the work of elder mediators; and trialling partnerships with different organisations, including legal services, retirement village providers and aged care providers.

#### NSW

#### *Let’s talk relationships—Relationships Australia NSW*

The NSW Government has funded Relationships Australia NSW to implement *Let’s Talk: mitigating the risks and responding early to elder abuse*, in partnership with EAHRU and Relationships Australia (Canberra and Region), with funding provided to June 2021. The project will provide mediation and co-facilitated mediation-counselling to older people, their families and support networks to assist with difficult conversations, manage conflict and make decisions regarding ageing and age-related issues.

## FAMILY INCLUSIVE SERVICES

<p><b>Vic</b></p>	<p><b><i>Better Place Australia—Respecting Elders Service</i></b></p> <p>Better Place Australia Mediation and Counselling provides family dispute resolution and mediation services. In addition to mainstream services, the <i>Respecting Elders</i> service was established in 2017 to support older people in resolving conflict in their lives and preventing elder abuse. The service model incorporates individual support to develop the older person’s self-advocacy skills and family-inclusive mediation and counselling. Some services are also part of the <i>Integrated Model</i> being trialled by the Victorian Government.</p>
<p><b>Qld</b></p>	<p><b><i>Seniors legal and support services</i></b></p> <p>Queensland has ten seniors legal and support services providing specialist services for older people experiencing elder abuse, mistreatment or financial exploitation. The services provide psychosocial assessments, safety planning, counselling, assisting with negotiations to recover money/assets, case planning and access to legal advice. Support includes the provision of information and referrals, telephone advice, outreach and home visits. Five of these services operate from community legal centres (see previous section). In 2018, Relationships Australia was funded to provide five additional seniors legal and support services in Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. These are staffed by psychologists, social workers or counsellors and provide specialist legal assistance through brokerage from external organisations.</p> <p><b><i>Relationships Australia Qld—Case management and mediation</i></b> <i>(expected to be established during second quarter of 2019)</i></p> <p>The Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department has made an offer to Relationships Australia Qld to develop a Case Management and Mediation service in Moreton Bay North. It will be based from the Morayfield Integrated Health Hub, a GP facility and the Strathpine Family Relationships Centre. General practitioners may be involved in case planning, where they have provided the referral. The service will provide case management and mediation, counselling and family and restorative counselling. It will build on and develop partnerships, including to strengthen referral pathways, such as legal assistance. It will aim to develop a holistic response to client needs to develop an integrated approach to case collaboration.</p>

## FAMILY INCLUSIVE SERVICES

<p><b>WA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Relationships Australia Western Australia—Case management and mediation (expected to be established during second quarter of 2019)</i></b></p> <p>The Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department has made an offer to Relationships Australia WA to develop an Elder Support Case Management and Mediation Service that empowers older people and their families to prevent and resolve conflict, and make decisions that protect the safety, rights and interests of older people. The service will be based in Mandurah, and will provide outreach services to the Peel region. The team will include case workers and mediators. It will build on existing partnerships, including the Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (APEA) network, local medical networks, the Family Support Network and the Peel Community Legal Service.</p>
<p><b>NT</b></p>	<p><b><i>Relationships Australia Northern Territory—Case management and mediation (expected to be established during second quarter of 2019)</i></b></p> <p>The Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department has made an offer to Relationships Australia NT to develop a Case Management and Mediation service. The service will be based in Darwin, with outposted services to Alice Springs and Katherine, and outreach services to Tennant Creek and remote communities. The service will be community designed and delivered, including consulting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse community groups. The service will promote early intervention and offer family mediation and counselling to assist older people to have difficult conversations and resolve differences. It will build on existing partnerships, and also collaborate with specialist staff in Relationships Australia, such as Aboriginal and Islander Cultural Advisors and Adult Specialised Services for those who were removed from their families to institutions.</p>
<p><b>ACT</b></p>	<p><b><i>Relationships Australia Canberra and Region—Case management and mediation (expected to be established during second quarter of 2019)</i></b></p> <p>The Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department has made an offer to Relationships Australia Canberra and Region to develop a Case Management and Mediation service in the ACT and Riverina Murray region in New South Wales. The service will provide a wrap around, support service including comprehensive family intake, assessment of risk and safety screening. Each client/family will have one central point of contact and a case plan. The service will provide case management and mediation, counselling and family and restorative counselling. It will build on and develop partnerships, including to strengthen referral pathways, such as legal assistance. It will build on existing partnerships, and also collaborate with specialist staff in Relationships Australia, such as the Dhunlung Yarra Aboriginal and CALD workers.</p>

## Health-justice partnerships

Health-justice partnerships are service models which embed lawyers into healthcare settings working with healthcare professionals and older people to identify potential legal issues and provide referrals. Health teams receive professional development on elder abuse and the legal sector and the lawyers, in return, develop a better understanding of the health sector through education and consultations. They have been used in responses to family violence and a range of other matters.

Health-justice partnerships recognise that vulnerable people may not identify that they need help, may not understand how a lawyer might be able to assist them or may have limited opportunities to obtain legal advice. With many older people having regular engagement with healthcare services and relationships with trusted providers, health-justice partnerships provide a mechanism for identifying abuse and implementing early intervention strategies.

HEALTH-JUSTICE PARTNERSHIPS	
<b>NSW</b>	<p><b><i>Redfern Legal Centre and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Health-justice partnership</i></b></p> <p>Redfern Legal Centre has undertaken a Health-justice Partnership with the Royal Prince Alfred in relation to elder abuse for the past four years. A solicitor attends the RPA three days a week and the service is being evaluated by Sydney University. The solicitor also works with the hospital’s Geriatric Social Workers and the Aged Care Assessment Team.</p> <p><b><i>Justice Connect—Health Justice Partnership (expected to be established during second quarter of 2019)</i></b></p> <p>The Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department has made an offer to Justice Connect to enhance its Health Justice Partnerships with St Vincent’s Hospital (Darlinghurst) and St Joseph’s Hospital (Auburn), and to expand to a third site War Memorial Hospital (Auburn). It will collaborate with the War Memorial Hospital’s Geriatric Flying Squad, providing legal outreach to vulnerable older people in the community by sending lawyers out into patients’ homes alongside hospital social workers. At St Vincent’s Hospital, it will explore the feasibility of delivering legal help to older people in regional and rural NSW via telehealth. The team will include a manager and lawyers, and will provide legal assistance to older people as well as referrals to pro-bono assistance. It will build on existing partnerships and also provide training and secondary consultations to hospital staff.</p>
<b>NSW &amp; Vic</b>	<p><b><i>Justice Connect Health-justice Partnerships</i></b></p> <p>Justice Connect has Health-justice Partnerships operating in two states, with five hospitals. They place lawyers in healthcare settings to provide education and secondary consultations to health professionals as well as advice, casework and referrals for eligible clients referred from the health partner. Justice Connect has established Health-justice Partnerships with: Cohealth in north-west Melbourne; St Vincent’s Hospital in inner Melbourne; Caulfield Hospital in south-east Melbourne; and St Vincent’s and St Joseph’s Hospitals in Sydney.</p>

## HEALTH-JUSTICE PARTNERSHIPS

### Vic

***Eastern Community Legal Centre—Specialist Elder Abuse Unit and Health Justice Partnership*** (to be established during second quarter of 2019)

The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department has made an offer to the Eastern Community Legal Centre to deliver a Specialist Elder Abuse Unit and Health Justice Partnership covering the Eastern Melbourne Metropolitan regions. The Health Justice Partnership will be located within the Acute and Aged Medicine program of Eastern Health, which is a major public health service across Melbourne's east. It will build on existing partnerships to deliver legal services and support to patients of the service and also provide training and secondary consultations. It will also partner with Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association to increase access and improve cultural safety. Please also see the section on Legal Assistance Services.

### Qld

***Caxton Legal Centre—Health Justice Partnership*** (expected to be established during second quarter of 2019)

The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department has made an offer to Caxton Legal Centre to deliver a Health Justice Partnership in Metro South Health, co-located at Princess Alexander Hospital, with possible expansion to two other sites over the term of the grant. The Health Justice Partnership will involve a shared care planning/management model for clients during admissions to provide integrated support focusing on the rights of the older people. It will trial a family care conference model and co-design discharge procedures for clients returning to live in the community. The team will include lawyers and social workers, including staff co-located at the Hospital. It will build on existing partnerships and also provide training and secondary consultations to hospital staff.

***Institute for Urban Indigenous Health Community-controlled Health-justice Partnership***

The Institute for Urban Indigenous Health leads the development and delivery of primary care and aged care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations in South East Queensland. The Institute is currently establishing a health-justice partnership within an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisation. The model provides legal services to community elders in the context of primary, aged care and respite service delivery. It seeks to integrate legal expertise and a justice framework into the delivery of comprehensive health services for individuals and families with complex needs. The legal services team provide a wide range of legal advice, including on family law and domestic violence, Elders' rights, finances, wills and power of attorney.



## Individual Advocacy

Advocacy is the process of standing beside an individual and supporting them to understand and exercise their rights and have their voice heard on the issues that are important to them. An advocate is an impartial person who: takes the time to understand an older person's views and wishes; informs the older person of their rights and responsibilities; assists the older person to explore options and make informed decisions; supports the older person to raise their concern and work towards a resolution; provides other practical forms of assistance; and supports the older person to develop the capacity to self-advocate. Older people seek advocacy assistance for a wide range of matters in addition to elder abuse. Advocacy organisations also undertake systemic advocacy, consumer and workforce education, and foster collaborative networks.

Legal assistance services and family inclusive services described earlier also provide individual advocacy. Banks have, or are in the process of establishing, customer advocates for vulnerable customers.

### INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

#### National

#### ***Older Persons Advocacy Network***

The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) has been engaged by the Commonwealth Department of Health as a single national provider of the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP), receiving \$25.7m to provide advocacy services between 2017–18 and 2019–20. *The National Aged Care Advocacy Framework* (December 2018) guides implementation of the NACAP. The aim of the NACAP is to support access to quality aged care services which meet an individual's needs through provision of independent, confidential advocacy support. NACAP provides free, independent and confidential advocacy support and information to older people, and their representatives, receiving, or seeking to receive, Australian Government funded aged care services. Advocacy services ensure the rights of consumers in community and residential aged care are supported, and that they are empowered to make informed decisions about their care.

In addition to NACAP funding, the Commonwealth Department of Health provided an additional \$3m to OPAN between 2017–18 to 2019–20 for elder abuse prevention activities and resources, coordinated through the *OPAN National Elder Abuse Advocacy and Prevention Framework*. OPAN Service Delivery Organisations in Qld, SA, WA, Tas and NT are also funded separately through state or territory governments to provide a range of elder abuse services.

#### ***National Disability Advocacy Program***

The National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) is a Commonwealth funded program that provides people with disability, of all ages, with access to disability advocacy that promotes, protects and ensures their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights. NDAP provides funding for 60 advocacy organisations across Australia. There is no age criteria for access to NDAP support, so older people with disability are eligible for assistance.

#### ***Australian Banking Association (ABA) member banks—Customer Advocates***

All member banks of the ABA have committed to introducing a Customer Advocate within each bank to help protect customer interests. The publication *ABA Guiding Principles—Customer Advocates* provides guidance to banks on the roles and responsibilities of Customer Advocates for vulnerable customers, such as older customers and those experiencing financial abuse.

## INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

<p><b>NSW</b></p>	<p><b><i>Seniors Rights Service</i></b></p> <p>Seniors Rights Service is an Older Persons' Legal Service and is the NSW Service Delivery Organisation of OPAN, providing NACAP services (see previous section). It is piloting a project to employ a social worker, who is working alongside other staff to provide social support interventions such as assessments, case work, counselling and referrals for elder abuse. Seniors Rights Service also receives funding from the NSW Government for advocacy for older people who live in retirement villages.</p>
<p><b>Vic</b></p>	<p><b><i>Elder Rights Advocacy (ERA)</i></b></p> <p>ERA is the Victorian Service Delivery Organisation of OPAN providing NACAP services. It is piloting the employment of an additional advocate to increase its focus on elder abuse advocacy and prevention.</p> <p><b><i>Seniors Rights Victoria</i></b></p> <p>Seniors Rights Victoria (see previous section) supports clients with advocacy as part of their integrated elder abuse service offering.</p>
<p><b>Qld</b></p>	<p><b><i>Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia (ADA Australia)</i></b></p> <p>ADA Australia is the Queensland service delivery organisation of OPAN providing NACAP services. It provides advocacy support for older people living in residential care who are experiencing or at risk of elder abuse. It has undertaken research to identify how to improve support for people seeking advocacy support for elder abuse. It has employed an additional caseworker, including to provide additional targeted consumer education sessions at aged care facilities. ADA's Human Rights Advocacy service provides information and individual advocacy support for people with a decision-making disability and people aged over 65 years, to express their views, wishes and preferences at the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal in relation to guardianship, administration and Enduring Powers of Attorney.</p> <p><b><i>Carers Queensland—Guardianship and Advocacy Program</i></b></p> <p>Carers Queensland is able to offer assistance to family carers who are experiencing difficulties in the role of caring for a person with impaired decision-making ability. Sometimes family and other conflict arises when caring for someone who is unable to make their own decisions. An advocate can support the carer in a range of circumstances, including when the carer's role as decision maker has been called into question, when older carers are harmed, abused and exploited, and to support them to deal with the conflicts and challenges of the caring role.</p>

## INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

<p><b>SA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Aged Rights Advocacy Services (ARAS)</i></b></p> <p>ARAS is the South Australian service delivery organisation of OPAN providing NACAP services. ARAS undertakes elder abuse advocacy and prevention, including to special needs groups. ARAS has developed resources on elder abuse and positive living, including approaches relevant for Aboriginal elders and Aboriginal communities, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. ARAS uses many approaches to engage with Aboriginal communities, including educating Aboriginal aged care and community workers, information sessions to elders and mentoring camps for Aboriginal elders and youth. ARAS also receives funding from Office for Ageing Well, SA Health to deliver the ARAS Elder Abuse Prevention Program for older people from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal backgrounds and the Retirement Village Residents Advocacy Program.</p>
<p><b>WA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Advocare</i></b></p> <p>Advocare is the Western Australian service delivery organisation of OPAN providing NACAP services. It has supported an awareness raising and outreach project in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions. Advocare is also funded by the WA Government to run the WA Elder Abuse Helpline and the Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (APEA) network.</p>
<p><b>Tas</b></p>	<p><b><i>Advocacy Tasmania Inc</i></b></p> <p>Advocacy Tasmania is the Tasmanian service delivery organisation of OPAN providing NACAP services. Advocacy Tasmania is also funded by the Tasmanian Government to run the Tasmanian Elder Abuse helpline and to provide some elder abuse advocacy support as an adjunct to the Helpline.</p>
<p><b>ACT</b></p>	<p><b><i>ADACAS</i></b></p> <p>ADACAS is the Australian Capital Territory service delivery organisation of OPAN providing NACAP services and it has undertaken additional consumer education sessions on elder abuse. ADACAS has received grant funding from the ACT Government to develop elder abuse awareness resources and to provide information sessions.</p>
<p><b>NT</b></p>	<p><b><i>Seniors and Disability Rights Service (Darwin) and Catholic Care NT (Alice Springs)</i></b></p> <p>The Seniors and Disability Rights Service and Catholic Care NT are the Northern Territory service delivery organisations of OPAN providing NACAP services. Seniors and Disability Rights Services has undertaken research on elder abuse in the Northern Territory and met with remote communities not previously visited by any aged care advocate.</p>

# Strengthening service responses

## PROTOCOLS, NETWORKS, TRAINING

Strengthening services involves ensuring the right support services are in place to assist older people experiencing abuse within a relationship of trust.

This section provides a stocktake of measures to build the capacity of the entire service system to address elder abuse through:

- Partnerships
- Protocols and practice guidelines
- State-wide and regional response networks
- Workforce training, professional development activities and resources
- Conferences.

Please note **Planning for future decision-making** covers guidelines and workforce training on planning for the future.

One approach to strengthening service responses has been developing partnerships, protocols, networks and partnerships at state-territory or regional level. These efforts are focused at building the capacity of the entire service system to address elder abuse. This is because a wide range of practitioners and organisations may be in a position to detect elder abuse, or be called upon to support a person experiencing elder abuse, and older people themselves are diverse. Partnerships between agencies and referral arrangements are an important part of Australia's response to elder abuse. Protocols and practice guidelines outline appropriate responses when elder abuse is detected or suspected. Networks facilitate sharing of resources, strengthen cross-agency collaboration and encourage better coordination across responses to elder abuse. Workforce training supports the capacity of workforce to support people seeking help with elder abuse. Conferences play an important part of raising awareness of elder abuse and strengthening capacity.

## Partnerships

A diverse array of organisations may be called upon to assist an older person experiencing abuse. They may be asked to support the older person directly, or indirectly by providing support and advice to the person responsible for the abuse and neglect of the older person. Abuse of older people is sometimes a crime, sometimes a legal or medical issue, sometimes a social services issue, or a combination of these. The diversity and complexity of elder abuse means that providing assistance and advice to the person responsible for the abuse may be a practical way to address the outcomes sought by the older person affected by abuse. For example, if an adult child is responsible for financial abuse of their ageing parents, depending on the circumstances, part of the holistic approach to ending financial abuse may be to refer the adult child to financial advice and housing assistance.

While the following list is incomplete, organisations called upon to partner in responding to elder abuse include: local councils; interpreting and translation services; Centrelink; housing authorities; financial counselling services and consumer protection agencies; accountants and financial advisers; banks, building societies and financial institutions; Land Title registries; general practice and emergency services; hospital based social workers; hospital or community mental health services; pharmacists; allied health professionals; rural health and primary health care networks; aged care assessment services and home care services; aged care respite; carers services; community visitors; drug and substance use services; homelessness and emergency accommodation services; family violence services; sexual assault services; and services which provide support for socially isolated older people; Dementia Australia; Parkinson's Australia; Motor Neurone Disease Australia; Multiple Sclerosis Australia; Carers Australia; Ethnic Communities' Councils; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal and health services; Stolen Generations organisations; Care Leavers Australia Network; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex community and aged care specialist services; and Veterans' advocacy and support services and specialised aged care for veterans.

Other people and organisations who have contact with older people may also have a role in detecting elder abuse or raising the call that something might be wrong, such as social networks (seniors clubs, University of the Third Age, Men's Sheds, local clubs), hairdressers, taxi drivers, or real estate agents. Experience has shown that volunteers and government staff who visit older people in their homes—such as home library services or staff providing advice on how to improve energy efficiency—can sometimes detect elder abuse.

## Protocols and practice guidelines

Protocols, internal policies, codes of practice and guidelines outline appropriate responses where elder abuse is suspected or identified. Some protocols and guidelines have been specifically developed for the health sector, and banking and financial services sector.

PROTOCOLS AND PRACTICE GUIDELINES	
<b>NSW</b>	<p><b><i>Preventing and Responding to Abuse of Older People: New South Wales Interagency Policy</i></b></p> <p>The interagency policy sets out the approach for how government agencies should prevent and respond to elder abuse. The policy mandates that all agencies with significant interface with older people through service delivery are required to have a policy and procedures on abuse of older people, and must develop appropriate protocols for working with key partners to provide seamless service delivery and a multidisciplinary response. The protocol is supported by the <i>NSW Elder Abuse Toolkit, Identifying and responding to the abuse of older people: the 5 Step approach</i>.</p>
<b>Vic</b>	<p><b><i>With Respect to Age — 2009 (Department of Health and Human Services)</i></b></p> <p><i>With Respect To Age—2009</i>, are the Victorian Government practice guidelines for health services and community agencies for the prevention of elder abuse. This document supports providers of health and community services who work with older people to develop policies and procedures, as well as interagency protocols to address incidents or suspicion of abuse.</p> <p><b><i>Interagency Guidelines for Addressing Violence, Neglect and Abuse (Office of the Public Advocate)</i></b></p> <p>This document articulates good practice guidelines for organisations, staff and volunteers who work with adults at risk of violence, neglect, or abuse. The guidelines articulate a process of immediate protection strategies, support and referral.</p>
<b>Qld</b>	<p><b><i>Guide for Elder Abuse Protocols (EAPU)</i></b></p> <p>The EAPU developed this resource to assist organisations to develop their own protocols for addressing elder abuse. It provides direction on what should be covered in a protocol, such as what constitutes elder abuse, the information that staff should collect, document and report, and the guidelines for making a decision whether an action should be taken.</p>

## PROTOCOLS AND PRACTICE GUIDELINES

<p><b>SA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Good Practice Guidelines to Prevent Abuse of Older South Australians—5 Steps to Good Organisational Practices</i></b></p> <p>Good Practice Guidelines have been developed by the Office for Ageing Well, to enable services and organisations to support the rights of older South Australians and implement safeguards for elder abuse prevention. The Guidelines provide a 5 step process designed to help organisations identify a range of activities which support the rights of older people: 1. Identify workplace champions 2. Complete and organisational self-assessment/audit and consider relevant actions 3. Develop an action plan using the recommended resources 4. Implement and communicate the plan 5. Evaluate the impact. Organisations with a commitment to older people are encouraged to make use of these guidelines to support better practice in the recognition, response and prevention of elder abuse.</p> <p><b><i>Protocol for Responding to Abuse of Older People Living at Home in the Community (Aged Rights Advocacy Service)</i></b></p> <p>This protocol was been developed by the Aged Rights Advocacy Service as a resource for community aged care service providers. The protocol includes definitions and signs of the different forms of abuse, risk factors and principles of intervention when working with older people. It contains a flow chart to guide service providers in providing a consistent response but recommends that regional services adapt the framework to reflect services and resources available in their area.</p>
<p><b>WA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse Protocol: Guidelines for Action (Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse)</i></b></p> <p>This protocol was developed to assist organisations working with older people to respond to elder abuse. The protocol outlines a five-step approach to responding to elder abuse, moving from identifying the problem, provision of emotional support, risk assessment and safety planning to referral and documentation.</p>
<p><b>Tas</b></p>	<p><b><i>Responding to Elder Abuse Practice Guidelines (Tasmanian Government practice guidelines for government and non-government employees)</i></b></p> <p>This protocol was adapted from the Victorian protocols. The guidelines equip workers to identify, manage and respond to cases of suspected abuse. The guidelines provide practice advice and referral pathways, and inform service provider training.</p>

## PROTOCOLS AND PRACTICE GUIDELINES

### HEALTH SECTOR

<p><b>National</b></p>	<p><b><i>Abuse and violence: Working with our patients in general practice (Royal Australasian College of General Practitioners)</i></b></p> <p>The Royal Australasian College of General Practitioners is the professional body for General Practitioners in Australia. It maintains standards for clinical practice, education and training. In 2014, it published evidence-based guidance on appropriate identification and response in clinical practice to patients experiencing abuse and violence. It includes a dedicated chapter on identifying, documenting, reporting and managing elder abuse.</p>
<p><b>NSW</b></p>	<p><b><i>Policy Directive: Identifying and responding to abuse of older people (New South Wales Health)</i></b></p> <p>This policy directive, introduced in 2018, mandates that all New South Wales Health organisations must develop internal protocols and provide training to staff to identify and respond to abuse of older people. It outlines requirements for what must be included in protocols, for example, guidance for escalating concerns through local processes and police, and pathways for coordination with other services and agencies.</p>
<p><b>Vic</b></p>	<p><b><i>Vulnerable Older People Coordination and Response Group (St Vincent’s Hospital)</i></b></p> <p>Hospitals provide a ‘window of opportunity’ for responding to elder abuse. Six years ago St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne implemented an evidence-informed, multifaceted approach to responding to suspected elder abuse. This work has been underpinned by an Australian Research Council Linkage Project in collaboration with the University of Melbourne. Since 2013, St Vincent’s Hospital has implemented a facility-wide policy to develop capacity to respond to suspected elder abuse in the hospital setting. The policy underpins a model of care which supports staff to identify pathways for intervention and response, a coordination and response group which reviews suspected cases, and competency training for all staff. Clinical management and the organisation’s leaders have been strong champions for process and system change.</p> <p><b><i>Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence (Royal Women’s Hospital and Bendigo Health) 4th edition</i></b></p> <p>The Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence (SHRFV) model was developed to provide a system-wide approach which is now being applied by hospitals across Victoria. Based on international best practice, the model has two overarching principles and five key implementation elements for a staged approach that is applicable to any Victorian health setting committed to improving its response to family violence. The primary focus of the SHRFV Toolkit is on violence against women and their children but it also includes material on older people and elder abuse. The Toolkit includes a large volume of training materials and facilitation guides which can be downloaded for free from the SHRFV website.</p>



**National*****The ACFA Approach to Financial Elder Abuse (Australian Financial Complaints Authority)***

The Australian Financial Complaints Authority (ACFA) has set out approach for dealing with financial abuse in banking transactions. The Approach is designed for financial firms, consumers and consumer representatives. The Approach describes the challenges in identifying warning signs of financial elder abuse and discusses what is considered good industry practice in responding to suspected financial abuse. It discusses how ACFA will assess complaints involving financial elder abuse.

***Australian Banking Association Code of Banking Practice***

The Australian Banking Association's (ABA) new Banking Code of Practice commences operation from 1 July 2019. The Code enhances protections for consumers including: provisions for inclusive and accessible banking; proactive contact with customers deemed at risk of financial difficulty; and a commitment to take extra care with vulnerable customers and to train staff to help. All ABA member banks will be required to subscribe to the Code as a condition of ABA membership. The protections in the Code will form part of the banks' contractual relationships with their banking customers. The Code will be administered and enforced by an independent monitoring body, the Banking Code Compliance Committee. Any person will be able to report a breach of the Code to the Banking Code Compliance Committee. Consumers and small businesses with disputes about the Code protections will be able to have those disputes heard by the Australian Financial Complaints Authority.

***Australian Banking Association Industry Guidelines***

The ABA, which assists with development of industry standards and guidelines, has produced two relevant documents. The *Industry Guidelines on Protecting vulnerable customers from potential financial abuse* helps banks to raise awareness of financial abuse, identify actions to reduce vulnerable customers' risk of financial abuse, and promote consistent arrangements to deal with suspected cases of financial abuse. The guidelines identify older Australians as a particular risk group. The *Industry Guidelines on Responding to requests from a power of attorney or court-appointed administrator* provide additional guidance which may help banks to identify and respond to suspected elder financial abuse.

## State-wide and regional response networks

State-wide and regional response networks provide opportunities for agencies to incorporate knowledge of local contexts and community needs into appropriate action. They also facilitate sharing of resources, strengthen cross-agency collaboration and encourage better coordination across responses to elder abuse. Network members commonly include but are not limited to state and local government agencies, hospitals and health services, aged care services, family violence services, housing and homelessness services, police, lawyers and agencies working with vulnerable communities.

### RESPONSE NETWORKS

#### NSW

#### ***Elder Abuse Collaboratives***

EAHRU helps establish, support and resource a range of Elder Abuse Collaboratives across NSW. EAHRU provides tools including *A Guide to Establishing Elder Abuse Collaboratives across NSW*; a range of Elder Abuse prevention and identification resources, resource cards for service providers and standardised PowerPoint Presentations to enable Collaborative members to deliver information sessions to older groups and colleagues to help build capacity to better tackle elder abuse locally. EAHRU support the following Collaboratives:

- Illawarra/Shoalhaven Elder Abuse Prevention Network
- Blue Mountains Collaborative on Elder Abuse Prevention Network
- The Upper Mid North Coast Prevention of the Abuse of Older People Collaborative—Coffs Harbour
- Lismore/Northern Rivers Elder Abuse Collaborative now Northern Rivers Community of Practice Ageing
- Wagga Wagga Elder Abuse Collaborative
- Sutherland Shire Abuse of Older People Collaborative
- Hunter CALD Elder Abuse Prevention Network
- Inner West & Canterbury Elder Abuse Collaborative
- Blacktown: In establishment phase
- Sydney City: In establishment phase

Each collaborative is made up of representatives from service providers who work with older people in their local area. Members may include aged care providers, council, legal services, carer support services, health professionals, police, and dementia support services. Collaboratives hold regular meetings to implement local action plans to generate awareness in their communities and build capacity of local service providers to identify and respond to abuse. An example of their activities is illustrated by work of the Hunter CALD Elder Abuse Prevention Network.

## RESPONSE NETWORKS

**NSW** cont.

### ***The Hunter and Central Coast Elder Abuse Collaborative and the Hunter Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Elder Abuse Prevention Network***

The Hunter CALD Elder Abuse Prevention Network was established in 2016 to develop a holistic and collective approach to addressing elder abuse in vulnerable CALD communities living in regional areas. Working with community leaders, primary health care network members, influencers and bilingual educators across communities and language-specific groups, the networks' objectives are to raise awareness and empower communities, strengthen service capacity, particularly in culturally responsive service delivery, and encourage cross-agency collaboration.

### ***Shoalhaven Elder Abuse Prevention Network***

The Seniors Rights Service, along with Shoalcoast CLC, have piloted the network as means to increase the availability of assistance of people in regional areas in New South Wales.

**Vic**

### ***Elder Abuse Prevention Networks***

The Victorian Government has funded ten elder abuse prevention networks in Victoria.

An elder abuse prevention network is a membership-based group of organisations, including community groups, organisations or businesses that work with or provide services to older people and others in their communities. The networks mobilise local communities and community organisations to identify signs of abuse, help older victims of abuse, and deter perpetrators.

Networks include Macedon Ranges Shire Council; Eastern Community Legal Centre; Merri Health; Ballarat Community Health Centre; Barwon Community Legal Centre; Frankston Mornington Peninsula Primary Care Partnership; Latrobe City Council; and the Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership. In illustration of the work of a network is given by the activities of the Eastern Elder Abuse Network.

### ***Eastern Elder Abuse Network (convened by Eastern Community Legal Centre)***

The Eastern Community Legal Centre has convened the Eastern Elder Abuse Network for a number of years. It brings together over 100 professional members from hospitals and health services, local government, aged care, family violence, government services, law, police and homelessness services. It has developed the Elder Abuse Case Conferencing Site to facilitate cross-agency collaboration and encourage better coordination of services. The system allows agencies to share de-identified cases with other services and provides instant access to support, advice and referral for clients who are experiencing or are at risk of abuse. ECLC has collaborated with bilingual community advisors and local service providers, to deliver a program targeting the Chinese, Greek and Indian communities in Melbourne's east. The program uses a fictitious scenario to start conversations, engages in family forums and works with interfaith community leaders.

## RESPONSE NETWORKS

<p><b>Qld</b></p>	<p><b><i>Gold Coast Elder Abuse Reference Group and Panel</i></b></p> <p>The Gold Coast Elder Abuse Project led by the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit brings together local stakeholders and government entities to discuss the role of their organisation in responding to and advocating against elder abuse. The panel enables collaboration on complex elder abuse cases as part of a person-centred model bringing together local service providers.</p>
<p><b>SA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Community response networks</i></b></p> <p>Office for Ageing Well is partnering with a range of organisations to establish a number of local community response networks to raise awareness about elder abuse, adult safeguarding strategies and rights, particularly focused on specific communities including older Aboriginal, CALD, and LGBTI(Q) people through its Ageing Well grant program.</p> <p><b><i>Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (APEA)</i></b></p> <p>APEA is a state-wide network of agencies working to prevent and respond to elder abuse. It comprises the Legal Services Commission, ARAS, the Public Trustee, the Public Advocate and the SA Police.</p>
<p><b>WA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse Western Australia (APEA: WA)</i></b></p> <p>APEA: WA is a high-level policy group coordinated by Advocare to support inter-agency collaboration to prevent elder abuse in Western Australia. Members meet bi-monthly to implement the strategic plan. Members include WA government agencies, Advocare, Legal Aid, Office of the Chief Psychiatrist, the Public Advocate, the Public Trustee, the WA Police, the Older People’s Rights Service and WA Local Government Association.</p>
<p><b>ACT</b></p>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse Network</i></b></p> <p>COTA ACT convenes the Elder Abuse Network in the ACT which brings together service providers working in the ACT.</p>

## Workforce training, professional development activities and resources

Many of the services listed in the publication play a significant role in raising awareness and training other services to recognise and respond appropriately to elder abuse. Given the range of workforce training implemented it is not possible to provide a complete catalogue of training initiatives. Instead this section highlights some primary activities and resources.

Public Advocates-Guardians and Trustees also play a role in raising awareness of elder abuse. For example, the SA Office of the Public Advocate runs education sessions on recognising and preventing elder abuse which can be adapted for different sectors.

### WORKFORCE TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, TOOLKITS AND OTHER RESOURCES

#### National

#### ***OPAN National Elder Abuse Advocacy and Prevention Framework (2018)***

From November 2018, the nine Older Person's Advocacy Network (OPAN) service delivery organisations will implement the OPAN's National Elder Abuse Advocacy and Prevention Framework. The Framework aims to improve efforts to prevent elder abuse by having a more nationally consistent approach within OPAN organisations to prevent and respond to elder abuse, quantify elder abuse, and build capacity. The Framework includes details on OPAN's: protocols for supporting older people, including potential referral agencies; approach to collaborating and partnering with other agencies including those which can assist older people with additional special needs; and an OPAN elder abuse data set. OPAN has developed 'Talk To Us First', which is digital training for the aged care workforce. The training aims to assist the aged care workforce to meet the new Quality Standards regarding understanding the role and access pathways to aged care advocates and individual advocacy support for older people and their families.

#### ***Financial Abuse of Older People Toolkit (Certified Public Accountants Australia-SRV)***

This website, developed in partnership with Seniors Rights Victoria, aims to improve accountants' awareness of issues surrounding financial abuse of older people, strengthen their ability to identify the potential for abuse and whether abuse is occurring, and build their capacity to advise clients appropriately and respond to abuse. The website outlines accountants' roles and ethical and professional considerations in relation to elder financial abuse, and provides links to a range of downloadable resources including case studies and checklists.

#### ***Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Clinical Guidelines and Webinars***

Chapter 10 of the RACGP White Book provides information about identifying and responding to elder abuse, as well as information on who is best to contact once suspicion of abuse is confirmed. In the professional development online portal section, the RACGP has also three webinars on recognising the signs of and responding to elder abuse.

## WORKFORCE TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, TOOLKITS AND OTHER RESOURCES

**National**  
cont.

### ***Geriatric Medicine Advanced Training Curriculum (Royal Australian College of Physicians)***

Elder Abuse is included as a thematic module in the training curriculum for physicians. Trainees are required to develop knowledge and skills in awareness of risk factors for elder abuse, recognising signs and symptoms, and formulating and implementing intervention plans to prevent or manage elder abuse.

### ***Elder Abuse Program (Nurse CPD online)***

This online training program is developed by nurse educators, and designed to help nurses understand their professional, ethical and legal requirements to prevent, recognise and report incidences of abuse and assault of an elderly person. The program is worth two hours of continuing professional development credits which contribute towards the annual requirements necessary for maintaining registration with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Board.

### ***Australian Elder Abuse Screening Instrument (National Ageing Research Initiative)***

NARI, supported by funding from State Trustees, is developing an elder abuse screening tool suited to Australian contexts, based on a review of existing validated elder abuse screening tools and focus groups with Victorian health professionals. NARI is currently trialling the tool at St Vincent's Hospital in Victoria. The vision is to develop an elder abuse screening tool that is concise, easy to use, that accounts for an older person's health and social vulnerabilities, and which outlines a referral pathway if elder abuse is suspected.

### ***Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care (PICAC)***

PICAC is a national initiative funded by the Australian Government, which comprises seven member organisations. PICAC are specialists in providing culturally specific strategic partnerships, training and professional development and resources. PICAC aims to equip and support residential and community aged care service providers to deliver culturally appropriate care to older people, and some members are undertaking work on elder abuse.

**NSW**

### ***New South Wales Elder Abuse Toolkit, Identifying and responding to the abuse of older people: the 5 Step approach (EAHRU)***

This detailed resource outlines a five-step approach to identifying and responding to elder abuse for agencies working with older people. It provides information on how to identify abuse, how to support (short and long-term) and refer people experiencing abuse, and guidance on documenting and reporting suspected, witnessed or disclosed abuse. EAHRU delivers face-to-face training and train-the-trainer workshops on *Recognising and Responding to the Abuse of Older People* for frontline staff and managers working in sectors where they engage with older people. EAHRU also delivers train-the-trainer workshops for CALD workers on how to present the community PowerPoint resource *Everyone deserves respect—understanding your rights*, and *How to stay safe* to older people in their communities and is currently translated into 16 languages.

## WORKFORCE TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, TOOLKITS AND OTHER RESOURCES

**NSW** cont.

### ***Identifying and Acting on Elder Abuse: A Toolkit for Legal practitioners***

In 2017–18 the NSW Government funded the University of Technology Sydney and the University of Newcastle to develop a brief screening process to assist lawyers to identify and assist older people at risk of, or experiencing abuse. The toolkit includes background information on elder abuse, short questionnaires and screening tools to aid conversations with clients, and principles to guide responses to assisting clients at risk or experiencing abuse.

### ***As Life Goes On Resource Kit (Uniting Church)***

This resource kit provides tools for service providers to run discussion groups raising awareness about ageism and elder abuse. The primary resource is a DVD which presents five different scenarios addressing issues including making financial decisions and addressing family conflict. The DVD is accompanied by a discussion guide. Developed for New South Wales audiences, this resource has broad applicability.

**Vic**

### ***Online Elder Abuse Toolkit (Seniors Rights Victoria)***

Seniors Rights Victoria conducts a wide range of activities to train the workforce, support networks and build sector capacity to address elder abuse. This toolkit explains what elder abuse is as well as its signs and symptoms. It provides advice to people working with older people, people working with older people who have experienced abuse, people working with people from CALD backgrounds and people supporting someone with decision-making and contacting Seniors Rights Victoria. Seniors Rights Victoria delivers a range of education sessions designed to inform workers' knowledge and understanding of elder abuse and provide an overview of services, referral pathways and relevant resources.

### ***Assets for Care (Seniors Rights Victoria and COTA Victoria)***

Assets for Care is a comprehensive resource designed to help lawyers detect actual or potential financial abuse of an older client, identify appropriate actions to prevent financial abuse, and outlines remedies and referral pathways if financial abuse has already occurred. It articulates lawyers' roles, duties and responsibilities when acting for older clients, particularly in situations involving a promise or an intention to transfer assets in exchange for care and/or accommodation. It includes summaries of relevant legislation, case studies and checklists for lawyers to further develop knowledge and guide practice.

### ***Elder Abuse Toolkit and Behind the Curtain (Eastern CLC)***

ECLC conducts a range of activities to build workforce capacity. The Elder Abuse toolkit assists local government staff who work with or provide services to older persons. It provides guidance on assessing and responding to elder abuse and designing and implementing an internal elder abuse policy. It includes a sample policy, worksheets and referral guides for organisations to draw upon. *Behind the Curtain* raises awareness of elder abuse among GPs and provides medical professions and their patients with information and links to support services in the region.

## WORKFORCE TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, TOOLKITS AND OTHER RESOURCES

**Vic** cont.

### ***Elder Abuse Prevention Online Training (Department of Health and Human Services)***

The Department of Health and Human Services in Victoria has funded free online training to assist in building the capacity of the Victorian workforce to identify and respond to elder abuse. It is aimed at anyone working with older people or who is interested in learning more about elder abuse. It is based on the practice guide *With respect to age 2009: Victorian Government practice guidelines for health services and community agencies for the prevention of elder abuse*. It includes informational content, videos, case studies, and brief questions to help users assess their learning.

### ***Elder Abuse Prevention Information Kit (Domestic Violence Victoria)***

This information kit is designed for agencies wishing to enhance their responsiveness to suspected and identified elder abuse. It comprises a worksheet to assess organisational capacity to respond to elder abuse and a sample policy that can be modified to organisational requirements. It is designed to be utilised in conjunction with the *With respect to age 2009* practice guidelines.

### ***Training as Part of the Integrated Model of Care for Responding to Suspected Elder Abuse***

The Bouverie Centre of La Trobe University, together with partners (St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne and Seniors Rights Victoria), is delivering training as part of the trial of the Integrated Model of Care for Responding to Suspected Elder Abuse. Workshops have been developed for community, aged, and health care staff at Latrobe Community Health Service, Melbourne Health, Monash Health, Peninsula Health, and Western Health. These workshops are designed to improve staff capacity to recognise and respond to suspected elder abuse, particularly regarding engagement with families. Staff are also required to complete elder abuse prevention online training.

The Financial Consumer Rights Council is conducting a project to develop skills and knowledge to enable financial counsellors to provide specialised assistance to older people as part of the pilot of the Integrated Model of Care.

### ***Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence Toolkit (Royal Women's Hospital and Bendigo Health)***

The Victorian Government funded the development and implementation of a framework for embedding the practice of identifying and responding to family violence (including elder abuse) experienced by patients. The toolkit includes evidence-informed resources and tools, training manuals and training and communication materials. The Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence model is now being applied in hospitals across the state.

### ***Elder Abuse Prevention and Financial Counselling—Financial Consumer Rights Council (FCRC)***

Since 2015, FCRC has been developing the capacity of the financial counselling sector to provide advocacy for older people, supported by philanthropic and Victorian Government funding. In 2018, the Victorian Government funded FCRC to develop training modules to build the capacity of financial counsellors to provide specialised assistance to older people experiencing elder abuse, in particular financial abuse. A pilot of the training modules is scheduled to be delivered by the end of 2019.



## WORKFORCE TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, TOOLKITS AND OTHER RESOURCES

**Vic** cont.

### ***CALD Community Resource Kits (Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria)***

Community resource kits support bilingual and bicultural workers to deliver community education to raise awareness of elder abuse prevention and response among CALD communities. The resource kit includes information about cultural context which may shape elder abuse risks and responses for that community, a film with four stories depicting different types of elder abuse, and a discussion guide. The film is also available in Arabic and Italian, but without the accompanying resources.

**Qld**

### ***Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU)—For Service Providers***

The EAPU provides a wide range of training for service providers, including continuing professional development-accredited training. Professional development webinars are available throughout the year. The EAPU provides a state-wide Multidisciplinary Peer Support Network to resource and support workers in rural and remote locations to respond to elder abuse. The EAPU website contains resources for service providers and information sheets.

### ***Financial Protection Service (under development)***

In Queensland, Caxton Legal Centre and Townsville Community Legal Service have co-designed this project with the Queensland Government. *The Financial Protection Service* is an outreach model which provides older people with information and pro bono referrals for legal and/or financial advice about preventing financial abuse. The project will also deliver a financial abuse awareness and education program for financial services professionals, based on building core competencies around knowledge, skills and standards.

### ***Supporting Health Service Providers to Identify Elder Abuse (Queensland Law Society and Australian Medical Association of Queensland)***

In 2017, the Queensland Law Society launched a trial designed to raise public awareness of elder abuse that encouraged older people to disclose abuse to their local doctor. The Society's trial was run with the assistance of the Australian Medical Association of Queensland. It enlisted the help of general practitioners and staff from 315 clinics to look out for the symptoms of elder abuse and refer patients to support services such as the Elder Abuse Helpline and Queensland Law Society's Find a Solicitor Service. Queensland Law Society also produced a range of resources for general practitioners to support the trial.

## WORKFORCE TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, TOOLKITS AND OTHER RESOURCES

<p><b>SA</b></p>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse Simulation (University of Adelaide)</i></b></p> <p>This tool is designed to train health practitioners to recognise, assess and respond to elder abuse in the context of clinical practice. The simulated learning exercise uses trained and experienced actors to portray patients in a clinical encounter who may be experiencing elder abuse. The accompanying manual details how to operate the scenario and includes training videos for actors and instructions for debriefing participants. The tool was funded by the Office for Ageing Well and developed in partnership with ARAS. The simulation learning environment involved over 20 older people who volunteered to act as people experiencing abuse or perpetrators. Actors and a counsellor from ARAS were video recorded as modelling an optimal assessment and resources. The teaching package is available from the SA Office for Ageing Well web site.</p> <p><b><i>An Examination of the Interaction and Effect of South Australia’s 2018 Adult Safeguarding Legislation on the Operation of South Australia’s Criminal Law and Coronial Investigations Project (under development)</i></b></p> <p>Office for Ageing Well has commissioned Professor Wendy Lacey at the University of South Australia to undertake a project on the analysis of the interface between adult safeguarding and the criminal justice sector, which will be used to develop a set of protocols and training for key agencies to support the implementation of South Australia’s Adult Safeguarding legislation and policy framework.</p>
<p><b>WA</b></p>	<p><b><i>GLBTI Rights in Ageing Inc.</i></b></p> <p>GLBTI Rights in Ageing works to improve the rights and wellbeing of older LGBTI people in Western Australia. It raises awareness of the needs and concerns of LGBTI people, and delivers LGBTI inclusivity training to the aged care sector in Western Australia.</p>
<p><b>Tas</b></p>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse (Department of Health and Human Services)</i></b></p> <p>The department’s website sets out the <i>Responding to Elder Abuse Practice Guidelines</i> and resources to support training on how to implement the Guidelines. The website has resources on elder abuse in other languages. COTA Tasmania also provides elder abuse information sessions for staff and volunteers working with older people.</p>
<p><b>ACT</b></p>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse Fact Sheets (Legal Aid ACT)</i></b></p> <p>Legal Aid ACT provides training to community and professional education for workers providing support to older people who may be experiencing or at risk of elder abuse. The training is supported by factsheets produced by Legal Aid ACT covering: Loans, gifts and debt; An adult child living at home; Decision making and your rights; safety Planning for your safety; and money and ageing—including providing advice to older people who are thinking about decisions such as selling their home and giving the money to someone who has agreed to care for them in the future, having a relative move in with them, and/or giving or lending money to someone.</p>

## Conferences

Conferences play a role in strengthening the service sector by enabling practitioners to share lessons and develop networks. A wide range of other conferences include sessions on elder abuse, including national and state conferences of community legal centres and the Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference.

CONFERENCES	
<b>National</b>	<p><b><i>Australian National Elder Abuse Conferences</i></b></p> <p>In Australia, the national elder abuse conferences have provided a forum for practitioners to raise awareness of elder abuse, share lessons about effective service delivery, and to advocate for policy and legal reforms. To date, five national conferences have been held in 2012 (Brisbane), 2013 (Adelaide), 2014 (Perth), 2016 (Melbourne), and 2018 (Sydney). The 6th elder abuse conference ‘Rock the Boat’ will be held in Brisbane in July 2019.</p> <p>The 5th elder abuse conference was held in Sydney in February 2018, and was attended by over 550 people. A large volume of material is available online from the 5th elder abuse conference. Sessions were videotaped, and 18 additional interviews with experts were videoed, along with discussion sheets, which are available to continue the awareness raising activities of the conference.</p> <p><b><i>Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conferences</i></b></p> <p>The annual conferences of the Australian Association of Gerontology cover a wide range of matters associated with ageing, including elder abuse.</p> <p><b><i>Australian Guardianship and Administration Council (AGAC) Conferences</i></b></p> <p>The fifth AGAC conference will be held in March 2019. The theme of the 2019 conference is “Upholding rights, preventing abuse and promoting autonomy”.</p>
<b>Vic</b>	<p><b><i>The National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) annual seminar</i></b></p> <p>NARI runs an annual seminar which focuses on innovation, research, policy and practice in elder abuse.</p>
<b>SA</b>	<p><b><i>South Australian Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS) –Conference</i></b></p> <p>In South Australia ARAS hosts a one day conference to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.</p>
<b>Tas</b>	<p><b><i>Elder Abuse Symposium</i></b></p> <p>The Abuse Symposium was held following the release of the ALRC report, to bring interested parties together. It was hosted by the Tasmania Law Reform Institute (TLRI), Equal Opportunity Tasmania (EOT), University of Tasmania researchers and the Council on the Ageing Tasmania (COTA). Representatives from Tasmania’s aged care sector, legal profession, police, unions, clinicians, academic researchers and decision-makers met to discuss a range of issues associated with ageism and elder abuse.</p>

# Planning for future decision-making

Planning for future decision-making involves helping Australians to put formal and informal arrangements in place to prepare for decision-making in their later years.

This section provides a stocktake of:

- Making informed decisions about the future and planning for transitions
- Family Agreements
- Planning ahead
- Supported decision-making
- Workforce training on planning ahead and supported decision-making
- National initiatives.

The following section, **Strengthening safeguards for vulnerable adults**, identifies organisations which have a role in safeguarding adults with decision-making disabilities.

This section covers measures which support people to maximise their involvement in making decisions about their lives. Like most adults, older people prize their freedom and independence, and do not wish to be treated like children or sheltered from risk. All adults have an equal right to make decisions that affect their lives and to have those decisions respected, even when those decisions may not be congruent with the views of others. Supported decision-making and substitute decision-making are two frameworks which allow older persons' wishes to be recognised and respected if they develop decision-making disability. Supporting a person to make a decision, including people with decision-making disabilities, can be complex and guidance has been developed to assist people to offer this important support. A wide range of resources are available to assist with planning ahead. A wide range of organisations play a role in raising awareness and offering support with planning ahead, and as a result this section is incomplete.

## Making informed decisions about the future and planning for transitions

Older adults can take steps to safeguard their finances and assets to protect themselves from financial and other types of abuse, by making informed decisions before deciding on a course of action. Many organisations and professionals provide advice and resources about steps to prevent financial elder abuse including making wills and enduring powers of attorney (EPAs), providing gifts or loans, dealing with adult children living at home, and making housing transitions. There is also a range of support to assist people to know their rights and plan for transitions associated with ageing.

### MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE AND PLANNING FOR TRANSITIONS

#### National

##### ***MoneySmart Website (ASIC)***

The MoneySmart website, run by the Australian Securities and Investment Commission, helps Australians improve their financial literacy and manage their personal finances. The website has a specific section for people aged 55 years and older, which includes resources related to having conversations with family and friends about financial decision-making, estate planning, and a brief section on financial abuse specifically.

##### ***Scamwatch (Australian Competition and Consumer Competition)***

Scamwatch provides information about scams.

##### ***Safe & Savvy (Commonwealth Bank of Australia Customer Advocate)***

This guide for older banking customers and their families, aims to improve understanding of financial elder abuse and to provide guidance on safeguarding their financial assets. It includes information, personal stories and checklists, as well as detailing specific actions customers (both at Commonwealth Bank and other banks) can use to protect their accounts, such as setting transaction limits and blocking international payments.

##### ***Department of Human Services (DHS) Website***

DHS delivers a wide range of payments and services, including Centrelink payments such as the Age Pension. The website provides information to assist people with financial decision-making. This includes information for older people who are entering into agreements with family members that involve an exchange of assets for future care and accommodation, and how that might impact on their financial security and entitlements.

The Financial Information Service (FIS) within DHS provides free education and information to help people make informed decisions about their current and future financial needs, and improve their financial literacy. The FIS provides a public seminar program, a dedicated phone service and face-to-face appointments. It can also connect people in severe financial hardship or experiencing difficult or extreme circumstances to other services within the department. FIS Officers are specialists with expert understanding of social security payments and financial matters. They are not financial advisors or financial counsellors. They are located across the country in DHS Service Centres.

## MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE AND PLANNING FOR TRANSITIONS

<p><b>National</b> cont.</p>	<p><b><i>Be Connected</i></b></p> <p>Be Connected is an Australian Government funded website which provides free courses on how to access the internet and use devices. It teaches the essential skills to stay safe online and how to avoid scams. This material is available in Arabic, Greek, Italian, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Macedonia, Spanish and Vietnamese. The <i>Be Connected Network</i> is made up of over 2000 Network Partners helping to make a difference in the lives of digitally excluded people. These range from libraries, Men’s Sheds, community centres, retirement villages, computer clubs and cultural groups. Members of the <i>Be Connected Network</i> have access to interactive training tools and resources for older Australians, their families and peers and local community organisations.</p>
<p><b>NSW, Qld</b></p>	<p><b><i>Legal Topics for Older People Diary/Seniors Diary</i></b></p> <p>In NSW and Queensland, these diaries are produced and widely distributed to help older people understand their rights under the law, and raise awareness about how to protect their rights and stay safe. The diaries include information about elder abuse, scams, funerals, pensions and planning ahead. In NSW, the diary is produced by NSW Legal Aid, and in Queensland by Legal Aid Queensland in partnership with ADA.</p>
<p><b>SA, available nation-wide</b></p>	<p><b><i>Knowing Your Rights</i></b></p> <p>The publication <i>Knowing Your Rights</i> aims to help older people of any age increase their understanding of their rights, especially at different times in their lives, and to recognise the laws that provide safeguards and protection. Recognising the importance of being informed and staying connected, the publication features advice and information on housing, services, consumer and employment rights, financial matters, family and health, legal rights, security and safety and volunteering, enabling older people to safeguard their rights and remain in control at important stages in their lives. Office for Ageing Well, SA Health has worked with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to co-design messages and roll out resources.</p> <p><b><i>Mindset for Life</i></b></p> <p><i>Mindset for Life</i> is a peer-led personal development program for people who have recently retired and are wondering what’s next. The program uses a peer model to help people design a successful retirement and to plan the next phase of their lives. The aim is for participants to have a greater sense of their own skills, abilities and priorities; a renewed vision of their future; and an achievable plan to get them moving in their chosen direction. Resources for the complete Mindset for Life model can be downloaded free of charge from their website. The pilot Mindset for Life project was developed through funding from Office for Ageing Well and a partnership project between The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI), City of Port Adelaide Enfield and the SA Council on the Ageing (COTA). This project will now expand its peer facilitators and be rolled out to metropolitan and regional areas, through a two year project funded by the Office for Ageing Well.</p>

<p><b>Tas</b></p>	<p><b><i>COTA Tasmania’s Peer Education Unit</i></b></p> <p>This unit provides a range of informative and interactive sessions to groups across Tasmania covering a range of health and wellbeing issues affecting people over 50. Peer education programs are highly successful as educators are able to identify with their audience, creating an atmosphere where participants feel comfortable and open to exchanging information. Speaker topics currently include <i>You’re Worth it—Preventing Elder Financial Abuse</i> and <i>Taking Control—Protecting Your Finances</i>.</p>
<p><b>Vic</b></p>	<p><b><i>Seniors Rights Victoria Help Sheets</i></b></p> <p>Seniors Rights Victoria has Help Sheets that include: Adult Children at Home; Plan for Your Safety; Gifts, Loans and Debts; Care for Your Assets; and Powers of Attorney.</p>

**Family agreements**

As part of planning ahead, older people may decide to change their housing arrangements. One change to housing arrangements may be the decision to enter into an assets for care arrangement.

‘Assets for care’ is best understood as a loose, umbrella term that captures a wide variety of arrangements. The key feature of the arrangement is that an older person transfers assets to a trusted person (often a family member) in exchange for an understanding that the trusted person will accommodate, and sometimes care for, the older person as they age. An agreement for accommodation for life is also known as a ‘granny flat interest’.

The asset transfer may involve sale of the older person’s home, or the older person contributing other assets. The likely outcome is that the trusted person will hold title to the property and the older person will be promised accommodation and care. At present many agreements are informal and the promises may be unenforceable. Failure to seek advice means that some families may not plan for unforeseen events.

Family agreements appear to work well for many Australian families and can fulfil important social purposes. However, failed family agreements can place an older person at a serious disadvantage. In a failed family agreement, the older person may be left without money or a place to live. Many submissions to the Australian Law Reform Commission identified this as a form of financial abuse.

Seniors Rights Victoria and other legal assistance services have developed guides to making family agreements. They recommend that parties to the agreement should take the time to consider a range of important matters, and to express the agreements in plain language. Developing the agreement should consider how the parties plan to address the older person’s need for accommodation and aged care if the family agreement breaks down, or if one party wishes to withdraw from the agreement.

The Department of Human Services’ website recommends that people get financial and legal advice before exchanging assets and money for the right to live in someone’s property for life. Creating a ‘granny flat interest’ can affect the older person’s eligibility for government payments and pensions. The Department of Human Services recommends getting a legal document drawn up so there is proof what has been agreed to, and notes this can help prevent problems later if things change.

## Planning ahead

As people grow older they may find themselves in situations where their capacity to make their own decisions may be limited, including due to a disability. Planning ahead is not only important in preventing elder abuse, but is an important way that all Australians can record their wishes and preferences to ensure they are respected.

Planning ahead involves using legal documents to ensure an individual's rights and wishes are clearly articulated and respected.

- A will sets out who a person wishes to receive their assets when they die.
- Enduring Powers of Attorney (EPA) and Enduring Powers of Guardianship /Advance Care Directive (ACD) documents (noting the law, terminology and forms differ between states and territories) allow individuals to appoint a substitute decision maker to make decisions about certain matters on their behalf if they cannot make their own decision and to write down instructions and wishes.
- Advance Health Directives (AHD), also known as living wills, allow individuals to specify what medical and health related decisions should be made, if they are no longer capable of making those decisions.

In addition to the material listed here, Public Advocates/Guardians, Public and State Trustees, legal assistance services, the health sector and palliative care services all provide information and assistance to people to plan ahead for the future. For example, Palliative Care WA is funded by the WA Department of Health to raise awareness and provide education to members of the public on end-of-life planning, including Advance Care Planning, AHDs, EPGs, EPAs and Wills. Likewise in Western Australia, the Office of the Public Advocate and the Public Trustee conduct sessions on planning ahead and protection offered by the guardianship and administration system—for both the general community and professional networks. They also provide support to assist private administrators to carry out their role.

State and territory laws and the general law govern the preparation and arrangements related to wills and enduring documents. Although all states and territories allow for substitute decision makers to be appointed, the terminology used and laws vary between jurisdictions. CAG has agreed to identify possible options for harmonisation of enduring powers of attorney, in particular financial powers.

### PLANNING AHEAD

#### National

#### ***Planning ahead—Start2Talk (Dementia Australia)***

Dementia Australia's online resource, Start2Talk, provides information, worksheets and other tools to assist with planning ahead. It provides resources for the person making the plan, principles for planning with someone else, information for health professionals, and principles for determining whether a person has the capacity to make a decision.

#### ***Advanced Care Planning Australia***

Advanced Care Planning Australia is primarily focused on advance care planning in health contexts. The online resource centre brings together information for individuals, as well as for their family, friends and carers, provides free online learning for health care workers, and provides links to forms and fact sheets for each state and territory. It provides information in 16 languages other than English. The Advance Care Planning Telephone advisory service can also answer advanced care planning questions.



## PLANNING AHEAD

### NSW

#### ***Planning Ahead Website (New South Wales Government)***

Developed as part of the 'Get it in black and white' campaign, this website provides general information on legal, health and financial decision-making, including preparing wills and power of attorney and appointing an enduring guardian. The website includes frequently asked questions, planning ahead checklists, fact sheets, relevant forms and links to relevant service providers and other information sources. Personal stories are used to illustrate both the positive impact of planning ahead and the negative implications when plans are not in place.

### Vic

#### ***Victoria Will and Powers of Attorney Registry***

The Victorian Will & Powers of Attorney Registry, maintained by State Trustees, is a free and confidential registry. Anyone making a Will or preparing Powers of Attorney can register information about their Will and Powers of Attorney documents. The Registry can help Executors and Attorneys find documents with ease. Wills and Powers of Attorney can also be stored in The Victorian Will Bank.

#### ***Take Control (Office of the Public Advocate)***

This booklet includes three separate self-help guides on medical treatment decision-makers, advanced care directives and EPAs. Using lay language, each guide provides information to help readers choose whether and how to make a decision. It outlines relevant laws and processes, and includes a detailed plain-language glossary, hypothetical personal stories to contextualise information, checklists, tear-out fact sheets, relevant forms, and step-by-step guides to completing forms.

#### ***Your Voice, Trust Your Choice (DHHS and the Commissioner for Senior Victorians in partnership with the Office of the Public Advocate)***

This booklet is a guide that provides tips for seniors to safely appoint enduring powers of attorney. It is a companion guide to, and should be read with, the Office of the Public Advocate publication, *Take Control: A guide for making enduring powers of attorney* that provides guidance on completing an enduring power of attorney form. This resource uses lay language to explain why a person might choose to make an EPA, what the risks and benefits may be, and provides guidance on key considerations throughout the process. It includes case studies, checklists and sample wording to include in EPAs. The Office of the Public Advocate also provides community information and telephone advice about powers of attorney.

#### ***Your life, your choice (Office of the Public Advocate and Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service)***

This handbook has been produced by the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service as part of a joint project of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and Office of the Public Advocate to deliver culturally-appropriate and accessible information to Victoria's Koori community.

#### ***Train the Trainer for Planning Ahead***

The Office of the Public Advocate (OPA Vic) has run train-the-trainer session for community leaders, educators and workers as part of efforts to ensure older people are informed about how to safely appoint an enduring power of attorney. OPA Vic has developed a manual for trainers, 'Your Voice-Trust Your Choice: A manual to educate yourself and others to protect older people from harm' (2018) to assist participants when educating seniors and other people in their communities.

## PLANNING AHEAD

### Qld

#### ***Office of Advanced Care Planning (Queensland Department of Health)***

The Office of Advance Care Planning can provide assistance with advance care planning information and provides resources for patients, carers, family members and health professionals. Advice about advanced care planning can be obtained by contacting the *Decision Assist Phone Advisory Line*. In Queensland, advance care planning documents may include Advance Health Directives, Enduring Powers of Attorney, Statement of Choices and acute resuscitation plans. Queenslanders can send a copy of completed advance care planning documents to the Office of Advance Care Planning for review and upload to the person's Queensland Health electronic hospital record.

The Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General is currently conducting a review of the approved enduring power of attorney (EPA) and advance health directive (AHD) forms and is developing explanatory guides to support the updated EPA and AHD forms. The explanatory guides will provide detailed information to individuals who are thinking of making an EPA or AHD and attorneys who may be considering accepting an appointment.

#### ***How to act appropriately as an Attorney under an Enduring Power of Attorney in Qld (ADA Australia)***

Advocacy service, ADA Australia has developed a number of facts sheets on duties and responsibilities of a person appointed as an attorney in Queensland, including an eight minute YouTube video on how to act appropriately as an attorney under Queensland Law.

### SA

#### ***Planning Ahead (SA Health)***

Planning Ahead initiative raises awareness about the importance of planning ahead and the legal tools available in South Australia, culminating in an Annual Week held in September each year. This initiative is a partnership between Office for Ageing Well, SA Health, Legal Services Commission, Office for the Public Advocate and Donate Life. The website provides information on various legal tools, as well as a series of videos in English, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese which explain the importance of planning ahead.

#### ***Advance Care Directives (SA Government)***

The SA Government Advance Care Directives (ACD) website provides information for individuals and professions on advance care directives, including a form which can be completed online, and free downloadable forms and a DIY Kit. The website includes information in other languages. ACD Forms and DIY Kits can be purchased from Service SA. The DIY Kit includes information for people making an ACD, substitute decision-makers and witnesses and includes example statements to consider including in their ACD.

The Legal Services Commission and Office of the Public Advocate run free education sessions on planning for the future, including promoting and explaining EPAs and Advance Care Directives.

**WA**

***Training, Education & Information (Office of the Public Advocate)***

The Office of the Public Advocate runs free education sessions for community members and service providers in the disability, health, aged-care, legal and financial sectors on planning for the future. The Office provides a range of information on its website to assist people to plan for the future. The website also has a number of publications including:

- a comprehensive Guide to Enduring Powers of Attorney which provides information for people considering making an EPA, step-by-step instructions to complete the form and information for people being asked to take on the role of attorney, so that they are aware of the responsibilities of the role
- an EPA information kit, which is a summarised version of the guide
- a comprehensive Guide to Enduring Powers of Guardianship which provides information for people considering making an EPG, step-by-step instructions to complete the form and information for people being asked to take on the role of enduring guardian, so that they are aware of the responsibilities of the role
- an EPG information kit, which is a summarised version of the guide
- a number of information sheets regarding planning for the future.

***Training, Education & Information (Public Trustee)***

The Public Trustee runs free education sessions for community members and relevant professionals about planning for their future by ensuring expectations regarding the management of a person’s estate and financial affairs are clearly discussed and documented. These sessions promote the importance of planning tools such as Wills, EPAs and EPGs, as well as considering Family Provision Act claims, Guardian & Administration Orders, future aged care needs, preferences and costs and managing family expectations regarding finances, assets, loans and inheritance.

***Training, education and information (WA Department of Health)***

The Department of Health provides online training for health professionals regarding Advance Care Planning and Advance Health Directives. Joint education sessions regarding planning for the future documents are also conducted occasionally with the Office of the Public Advocate and the Public Trustee. The Department currently provides funding to Palliative Care WA to deliver ‘planning for the future’ education sessions to community members. The Health Department’s website also provides a range of information and publications regarding Advance Care Planning and Advance Health Directives.

**Tas**

***Training, Education & Information (Various)***

The Public Trustee gives seminars on Enduring Powers of Attorney. Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania gives talks to community groups on elder law including enduring documents. Palliative Care Tasmania gives seminars on advanced care planning. There are Fact Sheets available on the Guardianship and Administration Board website.

## PLANNING AHEAD

<b>NT</b>	<p><b><i>Training, Education &amp; Information (Office of the Public Guardian)</i></b></p> <p>The Office of the Public Guardian has produced a series of fact sheets and checklists about advance personal planning and adult guardianship, with a series of accompanying videos with captions and sign language.</p>
<b>ACT</b>	<p><b><i>The Power to Choose (ACT Public Trustee and Guardian)</i></b></p> <p>The Power to Choose is a comprehensive guide to, and provides forms for, Enduring Powers of Attorney in the ACT. The ACT Public Trustee and Guardian provides a wide range of other information for Guardians and Administrators on the 'Fact Sheets and Publications' part of their website.</p>

## Supported decision-making

Supported decision-making is a process where a person with a decision-making disability is supported to make and communicate decisions. In Australia, the term is used in a range of ways including to (a) describe laws and frameworks that provide formal mechanisms to respect a person's rights, will and preferences, and (b) various forms of practical help and aid where parties take steps to support a person with a disability to make and communicate their own decisions.

Supported decision-making may be relevant for older people who have a disability that impairs their ability to communicate and to make and act upon decisions. This section brings together resources and education tools for the person, as well as the supporter and other parties. A range of parties may be involved in supported decision-making, including family and friends, health, finance and legal professionals, and aged care and banking staff. Supported decision-making may potentially reduce or prevent elder abuse by providing a means to ensure that the wishes of the older person are respected, and is part of a rights-based approach.

### SUPPORTED DECISION-MAKING

#### National

#### *Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre (University of Sydney)*

The Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre aims to improve the lives of people with dementia by developing, communicating, and implementing research that improves care. The Centre brings together consumers, industry partners, researchers and clinicians to develop research questions and ensure findings are applicable to the care environment for people with dementia. The Centre's project on advance care planning was developed with consumer input to examine how advance care planning can be improved so that the preferences of people with dementia and other cognitive decline can be known and upheld. Resources include community education resources, planning ahead workbooks and videos and podcasts.

Led by the Centre, the Support Decision-making Project involves a multidisciplinary group of investigators, including consumer representatives, clinicians and researchers with backgrounds in psychology, medicine, law and aged care. The Group has worked closely with consumer advisory groups across Western Australia, New South Wales and South Australia, to better understand the issues relating to supported decision-making for people living with dementia. The project has developed Supported decision-making principles, a webinar series, Policy Guideline for Aged Care Providers, a consumer guidebook and helpsheets in various languages. These resources are available on the Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre's website.

## SUPPORTED DECISION-MAKING

### **Vic**

#### ***Supported Decision-Making Resources (Victorian Office of the Public Advocate)***

The materials developed by the Victorian Office of the Public Advocate are suitable for older and younger people, with a decision-making disability. The materials are tailored to the Victorian context, as in Victoria there is a legal mechanism for appointing a 'supportive attorney' and a 'medical support person'. Materials include: *Supported Decision-making in Victoria: A guide for family and carers*; *Side by Side: a guide for people wanting support to make decisions*; and *Role of the medical support person* (brochure).

#### ***Support for Decision-Making Practice Framework (La Trobe University)***

The Practice Framework is a resource for assisting people living with cognitive disabilities to have greater control over their own lives, particularly in participating in pre-planning, planning and implementation of support plans under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). While the resource is targeted at those working in the NDIS, the resource has principles that are relevant for those working with older people.

## Workforce training on planning ahead and supported decision-making

Law Societies and other professional and community bodies have developed training and resources to assist workers to assist people plan ahead, support people make decisions, and determine capacity.

WORKFORCE TRAINING ON PLANNING AHEAD AND SUPPORTED DECISION-MAKING	
<b>National</b>	<p><b><i>Resources and Education Tools (Capacity Australia)</i></b></p> <p>Capacity Australia has developed a number of education resources for health, legal and financial practitioners on supported decision-making. These include 'Capacity and the Law' online text (free e-book); a banking tool for staff in financial institutions to assist in detecting and responding more effectively to financial elder abuse; a guide to the integration of capacity assessment with supported decision-making for health practitioners—the 'ASK ME' approach (Assess strengths and deficits; <i>Simplify</i> the task; <i>Know</i> the person; <i>Maximise</i> the person's ability; <i>Enable</i> participation); and the EMPOWERED project providing tools to apply supported decision-making in aged care.</p>
<b>NSW</b>	<p><b><i>When a Client's Mental Capacity is in Doubt—a Practical Guide for Solicitors</i></b></p> <p>The NSW Law Society Elder Law Capacity and Succession Committee has developed a practical guide on determining a client's mental capacity and a commentary on powers of attorney.</p> <p><b><i>End of Life Decisions, the Law and Clinical Practice</i></b></p> <p>This website is linked to the Planning Ahead Tools website developed for the general public. It provides information for health professionals regarding who can legally make end of life decisions in New South Wales and advice on how they should be made. The website also features links to other resources and useful contacts and a quiz for health practitioners to test their knowledge of the law.</p>
<b>NSW, Tas</b>	<p><b><i>Capacity Toolkit (NSW Government, Tasmanian Government)</i></b></p> <p>This NSW online resource is targeted towards practitioners and provides a practical guide to capacity assessment, informed by ideas related to supported decision-making and rights based approaches. The Tasmanian Government has adapted the New South Wales Capacity Toolkit to Tasmania.</p>

**Vic**

***Information for Lawyers (Office of the Public Advocate)***

The Office of the Public Advocate has developed a range of informational documents to assist lawyers who advise clients in relation to EPAs and in proceedings at the Guardianship List of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

***The LIV Capacity Toolkit and Guidelines (last amended Feb 2018)***

The Law Institute of Victoria has developed the capacity toolkit and guidelines to provide practical information about what to do when a client’s capacity is in doubt, the capacity standard for different types of legal transactions, and the powers and functions of substitute decision makers.

The Department of Justice and Community Safety, the Fitzroy Legal Service Law Handbook, the Office of the Public Advocate and State Trustees websites all provide guidance to lawyers on planning ahead.

**Qld**

***Capacity guidelines (under development)***

Alongside the review of the EPA and AHD forms (see previous section), the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General is developing guidelines to assess a person’s capacity for different types of matters, which includes information on the importance of providing support to the person. The amendments contained in the Guardianship and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 will allow the Attorney-General to develop the capacity guidelines in consultation with stakeholders and professionals with appropriate expertise. While the guidelines are not intended to replace professional expertise, a range of people, businesses and agencies may need to test a person’s capacity to ensure that the person they are dealing with has capacity to make a legally binding decision.

***Queensland Handbook for Practitioners on Legal Capacity (2014)***

The Queensland Law Society endorses The Queensland Handbook for Practitioners on Legal Capacity is a resource for providing a framework for assessing whether a client has capacity to give legal instructions. The Handbook provides practical guidance on the legal and ethical issues relevant to competency issues for elderly clients, clients with mental illness, intellectual or cognitive impairment.

***Office of the Public Guardian (Qld)***

The Office of the Public Guardian conducts community education which includes publishing guidelines for witnessing enduring documents.



## WORKFORCE TRAINING ON PLANNING AHEAD AND SUPPORTED DECISION-MAKING

**WA**

***When a Client's Capacity is in Doubt: A Practical Guide for Solicitors (2016)***

The Law Society of Western Australia has prepared a practical guide for solicitors on what to do and what resources are available to assist them if they are concerned that their client may lack capacity to give instructions or make their own legal decisions. It is prepared for Western Australia, but based on a Law Society of New South Wales publication.

***Advance Care Planning Resources (Department of Health)***

The Department of Health has developed an online training module designed to help health professionals understand advance care planning. The training takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. It is accompanied by a range of print resources.

**SA**

***Advance care directives***

SA Health has developed a range of resources and training materials to help health professionals understand their obligations under the *Advance Care Directives Act 2013*. Resources include fact sheets about decision-making capacity, consent and ACDs, and education and training videos/resources.

## National initiatives

Work is underway to develop a more national approach to enduring powers for financial matters as one of the priority action areas of the National Plan. If they wish to, Australians can upload an Advance Care Planning document to their My Health Record so health professionals can see the person's wishes alongside other health records.

### SECTOR DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

#### National

##### ***National Online Register of Enduring Powers Documents (under development)***

The Australian Government has announced, an initial commitment of \$2.1m to establish a proof of concept national online register of enduring powers documents. This responds to a recommendation of ALRC Report 131. Consultation with states and territories to establish a Register is one of the priorities of the National Plan, and is occurring in parallel with consideration of nationally consistent laws for financial enduring powers.

##### ***Options to Reform Financial Enduring Powers of Attorney (AGAC)***

At the 8 June 2018 meeting, members of the CAG agreed to identify possible options for harmonisation of financial enduring powers of attorney. To support ongoing discussion, the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department commissioned the Australian Guardianship and Administration Council (AGAC) to analyse existing arrangements, identify current good practice and outline options to develop nationally consistent laws for financial enduring powers. The Office of the Public Advocate (Victoria) has undertaken the project on behalf of AGAC. AGAC has compared similarities and differences in state and territory legislation for enduring appointments in relation to: the requirement to support and represent the will, preferences and rights of the principal; the definition of, and approach to assessing capacity; attorney eligibility; multiple attorneys; duties and obligations of attorneys; commencement of an attorney's powers; witnessing; scope of powers; gifts; maintenance of dependants; conflict transactions; record keeping; separation of attorney and principal property; revocation; offences/penalties; compensation and tribunal powers. While the paper identifies similarities across jurisdictions, it also notes that there are inconsistencies. The paper has been informed by extensive research in consultation with state and territory governments, individual AGAC members, and the Law Council of Australia. The Options Paper will inform the work of the Implementation Executive Group and sub-working groups to support the implementation of the National Plan and is available on the AGAC website.

##### ***Best Practice Resource for Making Enduring Powers of Attorney (AGAC) (under development)***

To prevent elder abuse, the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department has provided funding to AGAC to develop a best practice plain-English national guide for people planning to make an enduring power of attorney, and for those who have been asked to become an attorney. The project will be undertaken by the Office of the Public Advocate (Victoria) on behalf of AGAC, and be informed by guides that have already been developed at the state and territory level.

# Strengthening safeguards for vulnerable older Australians

Strengthening safeguards for vulnerable older Australians involves putting in place safeguards for those who may be vulnerable to abuse or neglect, or who have become isolated from family and friends. This section provides a stocktake of:

- Statutory authorities
- Safeguarding at-risk adults
- Police
- Regulatory and complaints agencies.

The general law presumes that every adult has capacity to make their own decisions, unless the presumption is rebutted. Whether a person has capacity to make a particular decision is determined according to the type of decision being made and the applicable legal test for capacity. A person with an impairment may still be capable of making their own decisions. For example, a patient who is diagnosed with dementia does not automatically lose the ability to make their own decisions, provided they satisfy the legal capacity test for the particular matter. In other words, capacity is decision specific—it depends on the particular decision being made. Decision-making capacity can also fluctuate. Whether a person has decision-making capacity may depend on environmental factors, the level of support they receive to make the decision and may be affected by other factors such as stress, anxiety, medication, infection, drugs or alcohol.

## Statutory authorities

Each state and territory has statutory authorities that have a role in protecting adults who have a disability that impairs their capacity to make decisions. Each state and territory in Australia has enacted legislation dealing with guardianship and financial administration. This state and territory legislation frames the activities of Public Advocates, Public Guardians, Public and State Trustees, and State Administrative Tribunals or their equivalents throughout Australia. The role of these agencies, subject to limited exceptions, is to protect adults who have a disability that impairs their capacity to make decisions and manage their affairs. These agencies protect and promote the rights and interests of adults with a decision-making disability. As roles and responsibilities differ between jurisdictions, it is best to check the web-sites of the authorities to clarify their roles and responsibilities. Guardianship and administration legislation allow:

- state and territory administrative tribunals (a board in Tasmania) to appoint the Public Guardian or Public Advocate to act as guardian, and the Public or State Trustee to act as administrator (financial manager) for an adult with impaired capacity. A guardian is authorised to make decisions about personal matters, such as health care and where a person lives, where a person lacks capacity to make those decisions for themselves. An administrator (financial manager) is appointed to manage the financial and legal affairs of an adult with impaired capacity.
- Public Trustees, Public Guardians and Public Advocates, whether acting as advocates, attorneys, investigators, guardians or administrators, seek to promote the best interests and/or rights of persons with impaired capacity and to safeguard them from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

In most states and territories, Public Advocates and Public Guardians may investigate and recommend to the Tribunal whether an enduring appointment should be cancelled or revoked. As roles and responsibilities differ between jurisdictions, it is best to check the web-sites of the authorities to clarify their roles and responsibilities. The Administrative Tribunals in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory can review a range of matters associated with enduring appointments. Tasmania does not currently have a civil and administrative tribunal, but a Board has a range of powers in relation to enduring appointments. The South Australia Civil and Administrative Tribunal has powers in relation to advance care directives, but not powers of attorney.

Statutory authorities also provide support for people who are appointed as a private guardian or administrator. Information about the sort of assistance provided can be found on the websites of state and territory of the following organisations, and advice about the support available is generally provided at the time a person is appointed as a private guardian or administrator.

## STATUTORY AUTHORITIES WITH A ROLE IN PROTECTING ADULTS WITH IMPAIRED DECISION-MAKING CAPACITY

<b>NSW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Public Guardian</li> <li>• New South Wales Trustee and Guardian</li> <li>• New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal</li> </ul>
<b>Vic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of the Public Advocate</li> <li>• State Trustees</li> <li>• Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal</li> </ul>
<b>Qld</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Office of the Public Guardian</li> <li>• Office of the Public Advocate</li> <li>• The Public Trustee</li> <li>• Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal</li> </ul>
<b>SA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of the Public Advocate</li> <li>• Public Trustee</li> <li>• South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal</li> </ul>
<b>WA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of the Public Advocate</li> <li>• The Public Trustee</li> <li>• State Administrative Tribunal</li> </ul>
<b>Tas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of the Public Guardian</li> <li>• The Public Trustee</li> <li>• Guardianship and Administration Board</li> </ul>
<b>NT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of the Public Guardian</li> <li>• The Public Trustee</li> <li>• Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal</li> </ul>
<b>ACT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Advocate of the Australian Capital Territory</li> <li>• Public Trustee and Guardian for the Australian Capital Territory</li> <li>• Australian Capital Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal</li> </ul>

The Australian Guardianship and Administration Council (AGAC) is undertaking a project to implement a recommendation of ALRC Report 131. Recommendation 10.2 of the ALRC Report is that AGAC develop best practice guidelines on how state and territory tribunals can support a person who is the subject of an application for guardianship or financial administration to participate in the application processes, to the greatest extent possible. The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department has provided funding to AGAC to develop the Guidelines. The project is being undertaken by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal on behalf of AGAC. Development of the guidelines is well advanced, and NCAT is undertaking consultations with a view to finalising the guidelines by mid-2019.

## Safeguarding at-risk adults

The Public Advocate/Public Guardian can be asked by the State-Territory Tribunal (or Board in Tasmania) to undertake investigations and/or provide advice. However, ALRC Report 131 and some other reviews have formed the view that existing arrangements do not adequately safeguard some at-risk adults including those who have decision-making capacity, but who are vulnerable to abuse and neglect due to frailty or disability. South Australia has recently implemented legislation to establish a statutory body with particular responsibilities for vulnerable adults and NSW has undertaken to establish an Ageing and Disability Commissioner. The Queensland Public Guardian has particular investigatory powers for adults with decision-making disability, and can receive referrals from third-parties including banks, doctors or service providers.

### SAFEGUARDING AT-RISK ADULTS

#### NSW

#### *NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner (being established)*

NSW will establish an Ageing and Disability Commissioner from 1 July 2019. The Commissioner will be a new, independent statutory appointee with an investigative function to respond to abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability and older people in home and community settings. The main role of the Commissioner will be to: investigate allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation of adults with disability and older people in home and community settings; provide support to vulnerable adults and their families or carers following an investigation; report and make recommendations to government on systemic issues related to abuse, neglect and exploitation; raise community awareness of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including how to prevent, identify and respond to matters; and administer the Official Community Visitors program, in relation to disability services and assisted boarding houses. The Commissioner will be given strong powers to ensure they are able to properly investigate matters. These include: the power to initiate investigations on their own motion, or following a referral or complaint; the power to apply for and execute a search warrant, and seize evidence, as part of an investigation; information gathering and sharing powers.

#### Qld

#### *Queensland Public Guardian*

Under the *Public Guardian Act 2014* (Qld), the Office of the Public Guardian can investigate allegations of neglect, exploitation and abuse of adults with impaired capacity. This includes all types of abuse, including: physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or financial abuse. Examples of neglect investigated may include alleged withholding medication or not providing regular food. The protective powers provided to the Public Guardian include, but are not limited to: requiring people to produce financial records and accounts; gaining access to relevant information (such as medical files); cross examining witnesses; issuing a written notice ordering a person who has been uncooperative to attend at a stated time and place, give information, answer questions, and produce documents; apply for an entry and removal warrant if a person is at immediate risk of harm; and suspending an attorney's power. Where an attorney's power is suspended, the Public Guardian is automatically appointed under legislation as attorney for health and personal matters for up to three months until the matter is considered by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. These matters may be referred to the Public Guardian for investigation through a variety of sources, including OPG's adult community visitor program, service providers, banks, family members and friends.

## SAFEGUARDING AT-RISK ADULTS

### SA

#### *SA Adult Safeguarding Unit (being established)*

South Australia's *Ageing and Adult Safeguarding Act 1995* establishes a new Adult Safeguarding Unit (ASU), the first of its kind in Australia, which will commence in October 2019. The ASU will work to safeguard the rights of adults who are experiencing or who are vulnerable to abuse or neglect. The new Unit will take a rights based approach, and focus on early intervention and prevention. It will have statutory responsibility and accountability for responding to reports of abuse, or neglect of adults. Anyone can make a voluntary report which the Unit will be legally required to assess. The Unit has strong powers to investigate the circumstances of a vulnerable adult who is, or is suspected of being at risk of serious abuse, including the power to apply for and execute a search warrant, as well as to compel information from a range of sources about the person to whom the report relates.

## Police

In all states and territories police play a key role in responding to elder abuse in accordance with their duty to protect community members. Frontline police officers can assist older people in a number of ways including raising awareness of personal safety issues and conducting welfare checks. In some jurisdictions there may be scope to protect an older person through the restraining orders legislative regime. Police play an important role in investigating and responding to elder abuse, including abuse which may constitute a criminal offence.

POLICE	
<b>NSW</b>	<p>In NSW, a Police Assistant Commissioner and an Assistant Superintendent provide a coordinating role between the Force and service providers in the government and non-government sectors, including liaising with the EAHRU, providing advice and sharing feedback on some police interventions. In November 2018, the NSW Government announced that a specialist Elder Abuse Prevention Officer will be located each of the 58 police commands across NSW.</p> <p>The <i>Code of Practice for the New South Wales Police Force Response to Domestic and Family Violence (2016)</i> makes specific reference to elder abuse. It stipulates that the roles of police in responding to abuse of older people are to (1) intervene in emergency situations where there is a risk of safety and/or harm, (2) respond to and investigate criminal offences, and (3) provide information to the victim and carer, where appropriate.</p>
<b>Vic</b>	<p>In Victoria, Victoria Police has identified seniors as a priority community requiring a specialist response. In Victoria, safeguarding of older adults is addressed through a family violence framework. As frontline responders to family violence, people are encouraged to report any abuse of older people to Victoria Police. Victoria has established Australia's first Family Violence Command, dedicated to family violence, sexual assault and child abuse in situations where the perpetrator and the victim know each other.</p> <p>Victoria Police has established 21 new Family Violence Investigation Units (FVIUs) across the state to provide a specialist response to investigate family violence. The FVIUs will undertake specialised training in all forms of family violence, including elder abuse, and have the capacity to investigate suspected elder abuse cases as part of their operational model.</p> <p>Additionally, the newly created Centre of Learning for Family Violence at the police academy includes elder abuse in its curriculum development. The appointment of 21 new Family Violence Training Officers (working with the FVIUs and front line members across each of the 21 police divisions) will enable training sessions to be conducted at a local level, specifically educating frontline police to increase their knowledge and understanding of elder abuse in a family violence context.</p> <p>Victoria Police has developed specific online resources for members to identify and respond to elder abuse including a five minute video presentation on the three key things to know about elder abuse, a fact sheet and case studies. A professional development day is held prior to World Elder Abuse Awareness Day each year, open to all police, to provide specific information on the different ways in which elder abuse may present.</p>



## POLICE

<p><b>Vic cont.</b></p>	<p>Crime Prevention Officers and members of the FVIUs provide community education on identifying and responding to elder abuse to a range of groups attended by older people including through Legacy, Probis and local councils. Victoria Police elder abuse experts are also regularly invited to present to key stakeholder groups in health and other sectors as a mechanism through which to continually improve relationships and encourage reporting to enable appropriate policing responses.</p> <p>The <i>Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence (2017)</i> makes specific reference to elder abuse. It stipulates that police act to protect victims of elder abuse including by seeking a Family Violence Safety Notice or Family Violence Intervention Order. Victoria Police’s Family Violence Command can also provide emergency responses, conduct welfare checks, refer older people to other agencies, seek input from a geriatric medical specialist, and offer specialised advice through its network of Victoria Police Family Violence Advisors.</p>
<p><b>Qld</b></p>	<p>The Queensland Police Service has a Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Unit. The Queensland Police Service has prepared the <i>Older Wiser Safer</i> handbook which provides elder abuse and crime prevention information and advice for seniors as well as information on programs and services.</p>
<p><b>SA</b></p>	<p>In August 2018, the SAPOL’s Public Protection Branch was established to support and coordinate the police response to family and domestic violence across the South Australia. It comprises three specialist sections, and the Family and Domestic Violence Section is responsible for the portfolio of elder abuse.</p> <p>The Family and Domestic Violence Section is primarily aimed at policy and training. It also has governance and coordination responsibilities, so police are well placed to work with agencies representatives to ensure appropriate policies are in place to identify, inform and enable an appropriate police to respond to reports of elder abuse. In the event that an operational response is required, a report may be referred to a district or local service area, or depending upon the seriousness or complexity of the report, it may be referred to the Public Protection Branch Victim Management Unit. The Unit comprises police officers who have been trained to communicate with vulnerable people.</p>
<p><b>WA</b></p>	<p>The Western Australian Police Force responds to incidents and allegations of elder abuse. Information cards generated for family violence attendances also include references to the Elder Abuse Helpline and Advocare. Police are encouraged to identify elder abuse in the incident management system. Police meet on a regular basis with key community groups that provide services to seniors and interagency groups for elder abuse. Western Australia Police has also prepared the <i>Safety Advice for Seniors Booklet</i>.</p>
<p><b>Tas</b></p>	<p>The Tasmanian Police has prepared a <i>Personal Safety Handbook</i> which provides advice about elder abuse.</p>
<p><b>ACT</b></p>	<p>The ACT Policing and Seniors Liaison Unit (SLU) deals with matters involving older people including safety and security, abuse, hoarding and related matters. Elder abuse (actual or suspected) can be reported to the SLU, which can take or initiate actions. Responses include visiting the affected person’s home, investigation and prosecution. The SLU is often the first point to undertake a check out a situation and can refer to other agencies as appropriate.</p>

## Regulatory and Complaints agencies

Regulatory and complaints agencies can consider complaints about agencies and service providers which have failed to meet the needs of an older person or abused their trust, or their rights. A range of Commonwealth, state and territory agencies exist that can investigate complaints from older people who believe they have been treated unfairly or unreasonably by government agencies or particular industries, such as the financial services or aged care industry.

The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (ADA) protects younger and older Australians from age discrimination. The ADA makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the ground of age in respect of employment, education, access to premises, provision of goods, services and facilities, provision of accommodation, disposal of land, administration of Commonwealth laws and programs and requests for information on which age discrimination might be based. The ADA also protects Australians from discrimination on the basis of age-specific characteristics or characteristics that are generally imputed to a person of a particular age.

### REGULATORY AND COMPLAINTS AGENCIES

#### Commonwealth

##### ***Reportable Assaults in Residential Aged Care***

Under the *Aged Care Act 1997*, approved providers of residential aged care must report to the police and the Department of Health incidents of alleged or suspected reportable assaults within 24 hours of the allegation, or when the approved provider starts to suspect a reportable assault has occurred. The Commonwealth Department of Health's webpage "guide for reporting reportable assaults" sets out responsibilities.

##### ***Australian Human Rights Commission***

The Australian Human Rights Commission can investigate complaints about sex, race, disability and age discrimination, breaches of human rights by the Commonwealth, and discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

##### ***Commonwealth Ombudsman***

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can investigate complaints about the actions and decisions of Australian Government agencies to see if they are wrong, unjust, unlawful, discriminatory or unfair.

##### ***Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission***

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission was established on 1 January 2019, and integrates the roles of the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner and the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency. The role of the Commission is to protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of people receiving aged care. It independently accredits, assesses and monitors aged care services subsidised by the Australian Government, and seeks to resolve complaints about these services. From 1 January 2020 aged care approval and compliance functions will transfer to the Commission from the Commonwealth Department of Health.

The Commission is led by the Independent Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner. The Commission will also appoint a Chief Clinical Advisor to provide advice, particularly on complex clinical care matters.

## REGULATORY AND COMPLAINTS AGENCIES

### **Commonwealth** cont.

#### ***Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA)***

AFCA considers complaints from consumers and small businesses about a range of financial products and issues. AFCA has issued guidance on a range of matters relevant to elder abuse which indicate how AFCA will deal with a complaint.

#### ***Office of the eSafety Commissioner***

The Office of the eSafety Commissioner is responsible for promoting online safety for all Australians, including targeted programmes for older Australians.

#### ***Office of the Australian Information Commissioner***

The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner addresses privacy, freedom of information and government information policy functions, including handling complaints, conducting investigations and providing advice to the public, particularly in relation to privacy and personal information.

#### ***Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency***

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency supports the 15 National Health Practitioner Boards that are responsible for regulating the health professions to ensure good practice, including managing complaints regarding unsafe practices or where a practitioner's behaviour may place the public at risk. State and territory Health Complaints Commissioners (see below) work closely with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

<b>NSW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New South Wales Ombudsman</li> <li>• NSW Health Care Complaints Commission</li> <li>• Anti-Discrimination Board NSW</li> </ul>
<b>Vic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victorian Ombudsman</li> <li>• Victorian Health Complaints Commissioner</li> <li>• Mental Health Complaints Commissioner—Victoria</li> <li>• Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission</li> <li>• The Public Advocate</li> </ul>
<b>Qld</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Queensland Ombudsman</li> <li>• Office of the Health Ombudsman</li> <li>• Queensland Health Quality and Complaints Commission</li> <li>• Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland</li> </ul>
<b>SA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ombudsman South Australia</li> <li>• South Australian Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner</li> <li>• South Australian Equal Opportunity Commission</li> </ul>
<b>WA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ombudsman of Western Australia</li> <li>• Western Australia Health and Disability Services Complaints Office</li> <li>• Western Australia Equal Opportunity Commission</li> </ul>
<b>Tas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tasmanian Ombudsman</li> <li>• Tasmanian Health Care Complaints Commissioner</li> <li>• Equal Opportunity Tasmania, the office of the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Commission</li> </ul>
<b>NT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of the Ombudsman Northern Territory</li> <li>• Northern Territory Health and Community Services Complaints Commission</li> <li>• Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commission</li> </ul>
<b>ACT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Capital Territory Ombudsman</li> <li>• Australian Capital Territory Health Services Commissioner</li> <li>• Australian Capital Territory Human Rights Commission</li> </ul>

# Directory of key services

This section provides telephone and website details for key national and state and territory services that can assist people seeking help with elder abuse.

The elder abuse telephone lines can provide information, confidential advice and referrals. They and the other services listed here offer a first point of contact to other services which may be able to offer assistance.

AUSTRALIA-WIDE		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>National elder abuse telephone number</b>	<b>1800 ELDERHelp</b> <b>1800 353 374</b>	<b>1800 ELDERHelp</b> is a national, free call number, which redirects callers from anywhere in Australia to a state or territory telephone line for confidential information, advice and referrals about elder abuse.
<b>Emergency Services</b>	<b>000</b> (Emergency) <b>131 444</b> (Police non-emergency)	Call 000 if an older person is in immediate danger. Otherwise, call 131 444 for police assistance.
<b>Department of Human Services</b>	<b>132 300</b> <a href="http://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/centrelink">www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/centrelink</a>	Contact DHS for information and assistance regarding social welfare payments and services including age pension, pensioner concession cards, and assistance in making informed decisions about current and future financial needs.
<b>Aged Care Complaints Commissioner</b>	<b>1800 550 552</b> <a href="http://www.agedcarecomplaints.gov.au">www.agedcarecomplaints.gov.au</a>	The Aged Care Complaints Commissioner provides a free service for anyone to raise their concerns about the quality of care or services being delivered to people receiving aged care services subsidised by the Australian Government.
<b>OPAN</b> Older Persons Advocacy Network	<b>1800 700 600</b> 8am–8pm Monday to Friday <a href="http://www.com.au/contact-us">www.com.au/contact-us</a>  This number will connect you with the aged care advocacy organisation in your state or territory.	OPAN offers free, independent and confidential services that focus on supporting older people and their representatives to raise and address issues relating to accessing and interacting with Commonwealth funded aged care services. OPAN aims to provide an immediate response to elder abuse within aged care (community and residential) and to prospective users of aged care services.
<b>1800 RESPECT</b> National sexual assault and domestic violence counselling service	<b>1800 737 732</b> <a href="http://www.1800respect.org.au">www.1800respect.org.au</a>	1800 RESPECT provides support and referrals for anyone affected by sexual assault or domestic violence. Support is provided through the phone line, online chat and online information and resources.
<b>Lifeline</b> National crisis support and suicide prevention service	<b>13 11 14</b> <a href="http://www.lifeline.org.au">www.lifeline.org.au</a>	Lifeline supports anyone experiencing a personal crisis. Support is provided through the phone line, online chat and online information and resources.
<b>National Debt Helpline</b>	<b>1800 007 007</b> <a href="http://www.ndh.org.au">www.ndh.org.au</a>	The National Debt Helpline is a not-for-profit service that helps people tackle their debt problems. Their website provides information, and the phone line is staffed by trained financial counsellors who provide free advice and can make referrals to face-to-face financial counselling services. They can also refer to legal services, crisis food and accommodation services, and health services.

AUSTRALIA-WIDE		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>Australian Financial Complaints Authority</b>	<b>1800 931 678</b> <a href="http://www.afca.org.au">www.afca.org.au</a>	The Australian Financial Complaints Authority consider complaints about credit, finance and loans, insurance, banking deposits and payments, investments and financial advice, and superannuation.
<b>Community Legal Centres (CLCs)</b>	<a href="http://www.naclc.org.au/need_legal_help.php">http://www.naclc.org.au/need_legal_help.php</a>	CLCs are not for profit, community-based organisations that provide free legal advice, casework and information. There are over 200 CLCs nationally, including generalist CLCs and CLCs specialising in elder abuse services. The website directs people needing legal assistance to their nearest CLC.
<b>Legal Aid</b>	<a href="https://www.nationallegalaid.org/contact/">https://www.nationallegalaid.org/contact/</a>	Legal Aid commissions are independent statutory bodies that provide legal assistance services to the public, with a particular focus on the needs of people who are economically and/or socially disadvantaged. Some Legal Aid organisations provide specialised elder abuse services.
<b>Relationships Australia Elder Relationship Service</b>	<b>1300 364 277</b> <a href="http://www.relationships.org.au/what-we-do/services/elder-relationship-services">www.relationships.org.au/what-we-do/services/elder-relationship-services</a>  There are services in each state and territory. Check the website for the nearest service location.	Relationships Australia provide relationship support services including counselling, family dispute resolution and family violence prevention services. They also run specialised Elder Relationship Services in some areas, which assist older people and their families to prevent or resolve family conflict, plan for the future and make decisions that protect the interests, rights and safety of all family members.
<b>BeyondBlue</b> National mental health organisation	<b>1300 22 4636</b> <a href="http://www.beyondblue.org.au">www.beyondblue.org.au</a>	BeyondBlue works to help all Australians achieve their best possible mental health. Staffed by mental health professionals, BeyondBlue provides one-on-one confidential support, information and advice through their phone line, online chat and online information and resources.
<b>Healthdirect Australia</b> National health information and advice service	<b>1800 022 222</b> <a href="http://www.healthdirect.gov.au">www.healthdirect.gov.au</a>	The Healthdirect phone line is staffed by registered nurses who provide advice and information on local services for non-emergency health issues.
<b>COTA Australia</b> COTA Australia is an advocacy organisation which lobbies for action at a national level on issues affecting older people.	Email: <a href="mailto:cota@cota.org.au">cota@cota.org.au</a>	COTA Australia's role is to promote, improve and protect the wellbeing of older people in Australia as citizens and consumers. It seeks to be recognised by government, the general community and media as representing, advocating for and serving all older Australians.  COTA Australia's website also provides calculators to help older Australians plan for the future. These include an Aged Care Calculator, and a fees and costs calculator for fees and costs associated with retirement villages.

NEW SOUTH WALES		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit (EAHRU)</b>	<b>1800 628 221</b> <a href="http://www.elderabusehelpline.com.au">www.elderabusehelpline.com.au</a>	EAHRU operates the state-wide elder abuse helpline and provides information, support and referrals for anyone at risk of or experiencing elder abuse or who is worried that someone they know is at risk of or experiencing abuse.
<b>Seniors Rights Service (SRS)</b>	<b>1800 424 079</b> <a href="http://www.seniorsrightsservice.org.au">www.seniorsrightsservice.org.au</a>	SRS provides free, confidential advocacy, advice, education and legal services to older people in NSW. SRS is an OPAN service delivery organisation.
<b>Older Persons' Legal and Education Program – Legal Aid NSW</b>	<b>1300 888 529</b> <a href="http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au">www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au</a>	The Older Persons' Legal and Education Program is a specialist service of Legal Aid NSW run in partnership with SRS. This service provides legal advice and can assist with taking legal action.
<b>COTA NSW</b>	<b>(02) 9286 3860</b> (Sydney) <b>1800 449 102</b> (Regional) <a href="http://www.cotansw.com.au">www.cotansw.com.au</a>	COTA NSW provides information and advice in-person and via telephone about issues of importance to older people. Through a partnership with Legal Aid NSW they also provide assistance to older people needing to draft a will, EPA or enduring guardianship.
<b>Public Guardian</b>	<b>02 8688 2650</b> <a href="https://www.publicguardian.justice.nsw.gov.au">https://www.publicguardian.justice.nsw.gov.au</a>	The Public Guardian is a statutory official who can be appointed by the Guardianship Division of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) or Supreme Court. The Public Guardian can be appointed to make important health and lifestyle decisions on behalf of another person.
<b>NSW Trustee and Guardian</b>	<b>1300 364 103</b> <a href="https://www.tag.nsw.gov.au">https://www.tag.nsw.gov.au</a>	The NSW Trustee and Guardian makes financial decisions for a person under the <i>NSW Trustee and Guardian Act 2009</i> . NSW Trustee & Guardian's role is to act as an independent and impartial Executor, Administrator, Attorney and Trustee for the people of NSW. It also raises awareness of the importance of planning ahead.



VICTORIA		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>Seniors Rights Victoria</b>	<b>1300 368 821</b> <a href="http://www.seniorsrights.org.au">www.seniorsrights.org.au</a>	Seniors Rights Victoria operates the state-wide elder abuse helpline, and provides free information, support, advice and education to prevent and address elder abuse. Seniors Rights Victoria is also a CLC and provides legal information, advice and casework.
<b>Integrated Model of Care For Responding to Suspected Elder Abuse</b>	<p> <b>Latrobe Community Health Service</b>            Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Liaison Officer  <b>Mobile: 0427 031 541</b> </p> <p> <b>Melbourne Health</b>            Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Liaison Officer  <b>Mobile: 0400 544 530</b> </p> <p> <b>Monash Health</b>            Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Liaison Officer  <b>Mobile: 0431 453 950</b> </p> <p> <b>Peninsula Health</b>            Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Liaison Officer  <b>Phone: 03 9784 7073</b> </p> <p> <b>Western Health</b>            Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Liaison Officer  <b>Mobile: 0423 842 103</b> </p>	<p>           A secondary consultation for professionals working with older people and their carers or family is available from an Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Liaison Officer at one of five health service locations that are part of a trial of an Integrated Model of Care For Responding To Suspected Elder Abuse.         </p> <p>           An Elder Abuse Prevention and Liaison Officer may be contacted about suspected elder abuse.         </p>
<b>Justice Connect Seniors Law Service</b>	<b>(03) 8636 4400</b> <a href="http://www.justiceconnect.org.au/how-we-help/seniors-law/">www.justiceconnect.org.au/how-we-help/seniors-law/</a>	Justice Connect has a specialised Seniors Law team that works with services older Australians use, particularly healthcare providers, to identify legal need and provide seniors with free legal assistance.

VICTORIA		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>Elder Rights Advocacy (ERA)</b>	<b>(03) 9602 3066</b> <b>1800 700 600</b> <a href="http://www.era.asn.au">www.era.asn.au</a>	ERA provides free, confidential and independent information, advocacy and support services to older people or their representatives who are receiving Commonwealth-funded aged care services. ERA is an OPAN service delivery organisation.
<b>COTA Victoria</b>	<b>(03) 9655 2100</b> <a href="http://www.cotavic.org.au">www.cotavic.org.au</a>	COTA Victoria provides information and advocacy on issues affecting older Victorians.
<b>Office of the Public Advocate</b>	<b>1300 309 337</b> <a href="https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/">https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/</a>	The Office of the Public Advocate safeguards the rights and interests of people with a disability. The advice service provides information or assistance regarding Enduring Power of Attorney, Guardianship or Administration matters. The Public Advocate, OPA staff and more than 650 volunteers provide guardianship and advocacy services for people with a disability. The Office acts as guardian when appointed by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal to make decisions in the best interests of a person with a disability. It also provides systemic advocacy, and provides advice, education and information to the public and workforce.

QUEENSLAND		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU)</b>	<b>1300 651 192</b> (Elder Abuse Helpline) <b>(07) 3867 2525</b> (Interstate callers) <a href="http://www.eapu.com.au">www.eapu.com.au</a>	EAPU operates the state-wide elder abuse helpline and provides information, support and referrals for anyone worried that someone they know is at risk of or experiencing elder abuse. They administer the state-wide elder abuse helpline. Their website also provides a range of resources.
<b>Seniors legal and support services</b>	<b>(07) 3214 6333</b> (Brisbane) <a href="https://caxton.org.au/how-we-can-help/seniors-legal-and-support-service/">https://caxton.org.au/how-we-can-help/seniors-legal-and-support-service/</a> <b>1800 062 608</b> (Cairns) <a href="https://www.cclc.org.au/our-services/seniors-legal-support-service/">https://www.cclc.org.au/our-services/seniors-legal-support-service/</a> <b>(07) 4194 3000</b> (Hervey Bay) <a href="http://www.hbnc.net.au">www.hbnc.net.au</a> <b>(07) 4616 9700</b> (Toowoomba) <a href="http://tascnational.org.au/seniors-legal-support-service/">http://tascnational.org.au/seniors-legal-support-service/</a> <b>(07) 4721 5511</b> (Townsville) <a href="http://www.tcls.org.au">www.tcls.org.au</a> <b>1300 363 232</b> (Rockhampton, Gladstone, Mackay, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast) <a href="http://www.raq.org.au/services/elder-abuse-prevention-and-support-service">http://www.raq.org.au/services/elder-abuse-prevention-and-support-service</a>	Seniors legal and support services provide free legal and social work support for older people experiencing elder abuse, mistreatment, neglect or financial exploitation. They can also provide assistance for family members and service providers who wish to refer an older person for whom they hold concerns. The services also provide free community education about elder abuse.
<b>Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia (ADA Australia)</b>	<b>1800 818 338</b> (toll free) <b>(07) 3637 6000</b> <a href="http://www.adaaustralia.com.au">www.adaaustralia.com.au</a>	ADA Australia provide information, education and support to older Australians who are receiving care at home or in an aged care facility with a focus on rights and responsibilities and guardianship and administration issues. ADA Australia is an OPAN service delivery organisation.

QUEENSLAND		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>COTA QLD</b>	<b>1300 738 348</b> <a href="http://www.cotaqld.org.au">www.cotaqld.org.au</a>	COTA QLD provides information and advocacy on issues affecting older Queenslanders.
<b>Office of the Public Guardian</b>	<b>1300 653 187</b> Email: <a href="mailto:publicguardian@publicguardian.qld.gov.au">publicguardian@publicguardian.qld.gov.au</a> SMS: <b>0418 740 186</b> <a href="http://www.publicguardian.qld.gov.au">www.publicguardian.qld.gov.au</a>	The OPG protects and promotes the rights and interests of adults with impaired decision-making capacity.  It makes personal, health and legal decisions (not related to property or finance) if the Public Guardian is appointed guardian or attorney. It investigates allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults with impaired capacity. It advocates and mediates on behalf of adults with impaired decision-making capacity. It educates the public about the guardianship and powers of attorney frameworks. It administers a community visitor program for adults residing in authorised mental health services, community care units, government forensic facilities, disability services and locations where people are receiving NDIS support, and level three accredited residential services.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>South Australia Elder Abuse Prevention Phone Line</b>	<b>1800 372 310</b> Monday to Friday 9.00am—5.00pm	The South Australian Elder Abuse Prevention Phone Line is a confidential, state wide service. The South Australian Elder Abuse Prevention Phone Line provides concerned callers with information, support and referrals to people with concerns about elder abuse. Anyone can call if they or someone they know is concerned about elder abuse.
<b>Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS)</b>	<b>(08) 8232 5377</b> <a href="http://www.sa.agedrights.asn.au">www.sa.agedrights.asn.au</a>	ARAS also provides information, advocacy services focused on elder abuse and aged care rights. ARAS is an OPAN service delivery organisation.
<b>Legal Services Commission SA</b>	<b>1300 366 424</b> <a href="https://lsc.sa.gov.au/">https://lsc.sa.gov.au/</a>	The Legal Services Commission provides legal assistance for South Australians as well as information and education about enduring powers of attorney, wills and advance care directives.
<b>COTA SA</b>	<b>(08) 8232 0422</b> <b>1800 182 324</b> (Regional) <a href="http://www.cotasa.org.au">www.cotasa.org.au</a>	COTA SA provides information and advocacy on issues affecting older South Australians.
<b>Office of the Public Advocate</b>	<b>(08) 8423 8200</b> <b>1800 066 969</b> (country callers only) <a href="http://www.opa.sa.gov.au">www.opa.sa.gov.au</a>	The Office of the Public Advocate supports the Public Advocate in performing their duties and in particular provides information, education to the public, individual and systemic advocacy, investigatory services and acts as guardian of last resort. The Office of the Public Advocate's Information Service offers information and advice on a diverse range of issues including rights and elder abuse, as well as information and education about enduring powers of attorney and advance care directives.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>Advocare Inc.</b>	<b>1300 724 679</b> (Elder Abuse Helpline) <b>1800 655 566</b> (Regional callers) <b>(08) 9479 7566</b> <a href="http://www.advocare.org.au">www.advocare.org.au</a>	Advocare operates the state-wide elder abuse helpline, and provides free and confidential information, support and referrals to anyone impacted by elder abuse. Advocare is an OPAN service delivery organisation.
<b>Older Peoples Rights Service (OPRS)—Northern Suburbs CLC</b>	<b>(08) 9440 1663</b> (Mirrabooka) <b>(08) 9301 4413</b> (Joondalup) <a href="http://www.nsclegal.org.au/legal-services/elder-law-services">www.nsclegal.org.au/legal-services/elder-law-services</a>	OPRS is a specialist legal service run in partnership with Advocare that offers legal assistance and social work services to people at risk of or experiencing elder abuse.
<b>Legal Aid Western Australia</b>	<b>1300 650 579</b> <a href="https://www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/">https://www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/</a>	Legal Aid Western Australia provides legal assistance for people in Western Australia and operates the Seniors Rights Advocacy Service.
<b>COTA WA</b>	<b>(08) 9472 0104</b> <a href="http://www.cotawa.org.au">www.cotawa.org.au</a>	COTA WA provides information and advocacy on issues affecting older Western Australians.
<b>Office of the Public Advocate of Western Australia</b>	<b>1300 858 455</b> <b>(08) 9278 7300</b> Email: <a href="mailto:opa@justice.wa.gov.au">opa@justice.wa.gov.au</a> <a href="https://www.publicadvocate.wa.gov.au">https://www.publicadvocate.wa.gov.au</a>	The Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) works to promote and protect the human rights of Western Australian adults with decision-making disabilities. The advocacy and investigation team can undertake investigations to determine whether vulnerable adults with a decision-making disability are at risk, unable to make their own decisions and in need of someone stepping into a decision-making role for them. The Public Advocate is the guardian when appointed by the State Administrative Tribunal to make decisions in the best interests of the person with a decision-making disability. The Office provides an advisory service and holds community education sessions for community members and service providers.

TASMANIA		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>Advocacy Tasmania Inc. (ATI)</b>	<b>1800 441 169</b> (Elder Abuse Helpline) <b>(03) 6237 0047</b> (Interstate callers) <a href="http://www.advocacytasmania.org.au">www.advocacytasmania.org.au</a>	ATI operates the state-wide elder abuse helpline, and provides free and independent information, advocacy and support for people who are impacted by elder abuse. ATI is an OPAN service delivery organisation.
<b>Older People's Legal Service —Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania</b>	<b>1300 366 611</b> <a href="http://www.legalaid.tas.gov.au/need-help/older-peoples-legal-service/">www.legalaid.tas.gov.au/need-help/older-peoples-legal-service/</a>	The Older People's Legal Service employs specialist lawyers to provide information, legal advice and assistance on issues including preventing abuse, advance planning and older people's rights.
<b>COTA Tasmania</b>	<b>(03) 6231 3265</b> <a href="http://www.cotatas.org.au">www.cotatas.org.au</a>	COTA Tasmania provides information and advocacy on issues affecting older Tasmanians. COTA Tasmania also runs elder abuse prevention programs and hosts clinics in collaboration with Legal Aid, providing legal advice, representation and referrals across areas such as advance care planning and family conflicts.
<b>Office of the Public Guardian for Tasmania</b>	<b>03 6165 3444</b> Email: <a href="mailto:OPG@publicguardian.tas.gov.au">OPG@publicguardian.tas.gov.au</a> <a href="https://www.publicguardian.tas.gov.au">https://www.publicguardian.tas.gov.au</a>	The Office of the Public Guardian promotes, speaks for, and protects the rights and interests of people with disabilities in Tasmania. It acts as the guardian of people with disabilities when appointed by the Guardianship and Administration Board. The Office also has an advocacy role with decision making disabilities in Tasmania, and may also investigate complaints and allegations concerning the actions of a guardian or administrator or a person acting or claiming to act under an enduring power of attorney.

NORTHERN TERRITORY		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>Darwin Community Legal Service (DCLS)</b>  <b>Seniors and Disability Rights Service</b>	<b>1800 037 072</b> <b>1800 812 953</b> <a href="https://www.dcls.org.au/legal-and-advocacy-services/seniors-and-disability-rights/">https://www.dcls.org.au/legal-and-advocacy-services/seniors-and-disability-rights/</a>	<p>DCLS operates an information line that provides free, confidential and independent information, education and referrals for anyone at risk of or experiencing elder abuse or who is worried that someone they know is at risk of or experiencing abuse.</p> <p>The Seniors and Disability Rights Service is based in Darwin. The Service provides information and help about rights regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where you live</li> <li>• care and services you are receiving</li> <li>• activities in your community</li> <li>• support, representation and referral</li> <li>• people not respecting your culture</li> <li>• problems where you work</li> <li>• access to an interpreter.</li> </ul> <p>DCLS is an OPAN service delivery organisation.</p>
<b>CatholicCare NT</b>	<b>(08) 8944 2000</b> (Darwin) <b>(08) 8901 0777</b> (Katherine) <b>(08) 8962 3065</b> (Tennant Creek) <b>(08) 8958 2400</b> (Alice Springs) <b>(08) 8932 9977</b> (Palmerston) <a href="http://www.catholicarent.org.au">www.catholicarent.org.au</a>	<p>CatholicCare NT provides free advocacy, support and information about aged care services across the NT. CatholicCare NT is an OPAN service delivery organisation.</p>
<b>COTA NT</b>	<b>(08) 8941 1004</b> <a href="http://www.cotant.org.au">www.cotant.org.au</a>	<p>COTA NT provides information and advocacy on issues affecting older Territorians.</p>
<b>Office of the Public Guardian of the Northern Territory</b>	<b>1800 810 979</b> Email: <a href="mailto:public.guardian@nt.gov.au">public.guardian@nt.gov.au</a> <a href="https://publicguardian.nt.gov.au">https://publicguardian.nt.gov.au</a>	<p>The Office of the Public Guardian of the Northern Territory is responsible for providing guardianship and advocacy on behalf of adults with impaired decision-making capacity. The Office provides guardianship for adults where appointed or needed, and can monitor and investigate complaints about the conduct of guardians. The Office also helps the NT Civil and Administrative Tribunal to decide guardianship orders, by providing background information about guardianship applications. Other functions include advocacy on behalf of adults with impaired decision-making capacity, policy development, service improvement, community education, investigations, and research.</p>



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY		
ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION	HOW CAN THEY HELP?
<b>Older Persons ACT Legal Service (OPALS)—Legal Aid ACT</b>	<b>(02) 6243 3436</b> (OPALS) <b>1300 654 314</b> (Legal Aid helpline) <a href="http://www.legalaidact.org.au/opals">www.legalaidact.org.au/opals</a>	OPALS operates the territory-wide elder abuse helpline and provides assistance with issues involving elder abuse, enduring powers of attorney, guardianship and financial arrangements with family members. Assistance may include advocating with family or services on an older person's behalf or, if necessary, through mediation and court proceedings. The Legal Aid helpline also provides general legal information and advice.
<b>ACT Police Seniors Liaison Unit</b>	<b>(02) 62457548</b> , or <b>131 444</b>	The ACT Police Seniors Liaison Unit deals with matters involving older people, including suspected elder abuse. The Seniors Liaison Officer can assist with a wide range of matters.
<b>ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service (ADACAS)</b>	<b>(02) 6242 5060</b> <a href="http://www.adacas.org.au">www.adacas.org.au</a>	ADACAS is an advocacy organisation that provides help and support to people living in aged care facilities and people who use in-home aged care services. ADACAS can provide individual case support to people at risk of or experiencing abuse. ADACAS is an OPAN service delivery organisation.
<b>COTA ACT</b>	<b>(02) 6282 3777</b> <a href="http://www.cotaact.org.au">www.cotaact.org.au</a>	COTA ACT provides information and referrals in-person and via the seniors information telephone line about issues affecting older people.
<b>Public Advocate of the ACT</b>	<b>(02) 6205 222</b> SMS: <b>0466 169997</b> email: <a href="mailto:hrc@act.gov.au">hrc@act.gov.au</a> <a href="http://hrc.act.gov.au/public-advocate/">hrc.act.gov.au/public-advocate/</a>	The Public Advocate of the ACT supports children, young people and adults experiencing vulnerability. It provides a range of services that focus on upholding a person's human rights, and maximising their autonomy and dignity of their choice. The Public Advocate of the ACT's work includes individual advocacy, systemic advocacy and oversight and monitoring. This includes monitoring consents made by guardians and the <i>Guardianship and Management of Property Act 1991</i> and certain actions taken by attorneys under the <i>Powers of Attorney Act 2006</i> .
<b>Public Trustee and Guardian</b>	<b>(02) 6207 9800</b> <a href="https://www.ptg.act.gov.au/contact">https://www.ptg.act.gov.au/contact</a>	The ACT Public Trustee and Guardian offers permanent and secure Trustee, Guardianship and Administration services to the ACT community. Other services include raising awareness of the importance of having a valid and up-to-date Will and Enduring Power of Attorney; providing an annual examination of the accounts maintained by external managers on behalf of people with impaired decision-making ability; and administering the ACT Official Visitors Scheme.