

# Respect Older People: Call it Out

By calling out [ageism](#) and [sexism](#), we can prevent [elder abuse \(EA\)](#) and violence against older people.

The [National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study NEAPS \(aifs.gov.au\)](#) investigated the prevalence and nature of elder abuse in Australia, who is most likely to experience abuse, who commits abuse, and how people respond to abuse.

**Key NEAPS messages** [Research snapshots \(aifs.gov.au\)](#)

- **One in six older Australians (15%) report abuse** in a 12-month period (before covid-pandemic)
- Elder abuse (EA) can take the form of **psychological abuse (12%), neglect (3%), financial abuse (2%), physical abuse (2%) and sexual abuse (1%)**
- **Perpetrators of elder abuse (EA) are often family members, mostly adult children**, but they can also be friends, neighbours, and acquaintances (& intimate partners in approx.1/3 of cases).
- **People with poor physical or psychological health and higher levels of social isolation are more likely to experience abuse.**
- **Two thirds of older people do not seek help** when they experience abuse (61%)
- **Most victims of EA find the support of trusted family and friends most helpful.**

*(There are groups this study did not cover inclusive of people living in residential care and people with cognitive impairment. Further research on elder abuse with these groups is needed).*

**\*\*During Covid-pandemic abuse against older people escalated and has been described as the 'second shadow pandemic' behind violence against women and children (Ref.)**

*Elder abuse (EA) is a serious problem in Australia. EA needs policy attention, because it is a human rights issue and with the number of older people projected to double over the next 25 years to around nine million, elder abuse cases will also rise.*

**Western Health has specific governance (attached) & dedicated [elder abuse \(EA\)](#) clinicians**

**Carla Wilkie:** Elder Abuse Prevention & Response Liaison Officer (EALO)

\*When staff suspect, see or older person tells you they are being controlled, hurt or are worried or fearful of another person. Contact Carla for advice, support & to access specialised elder abuse services **mob: 0423 842 103** or [elderabuseenquiries@wh.org.au](mailto:elderabuseenquiries@wh.org.au)

**Kellie Plasajec:** Elder Abuse case management, **Derek Bartolo:** Financial Counselling

**Grant Broadbent-Smith & Sudhir Dean:** Therapeutic Counselling & mediation



**Other related links:** [Elder Abuse Learning Hub](#) (DFFH); [Primary prevention interventions for elder abuse](#) (Respect Vic.); [Elder abuse & dementia](#) (NARI); [Elder Abuse](#) (Senior's Rights Victoria); [Elder abuse](#) (AHRC); [Abuse of older people](#) (OPAN); [Preventing elder abuse](#) (Compass); [SIRS](#) (ACQSC)

**Elder Abuse Supports:** Dial '000' in an emergency. **Safe Steps:** 1800 015 188, **1800RESPECT**, **1800ELDERHELP**