

As we age, we may need some help along the way. That's when we turn to the people we trust to look out for us and hopefully look after us.

Like all of us, older people have the right to;

- Live in safety**
- Be treated with dignity and respect**
- Make their own decisions even if others disagree.**

When these rights are denied it may be elder abuse.

Now with the Respecting Elders Service older people can receive the confidential support they need to resolve conflict in their lives.



We owe them respect and care.

Older people have a right to live a safe and stress free life.

Their wishes, wellbeing and property should always be respected.

Help them enjoy life again.

Respecting Elders is a philanthropically funded service that supports older people in resolving conflict in their lives and preventing elder abuse.

Supported by Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation in partnership with Seniors Rights Victoria and the Eastern Community Legal Centre.



1800 214 117
freecall (Includes freecall from mobiles)

mediation.com.au



Interpreters available on request.



FMC 081



Respecting Elders
Support & Conflict Resolution Services

What is elder abuse?

Elder abuse is any act which causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust.

Abuse can be unintentional or deliberate and can take many forms. It may range from unintended effects of poor care through to serious physical injury inflicted deliberately. Elder abuse also includes emotional harm or even financial loss of a home and belongings.

Who is an abuser?

The sad truth is that in the majority of cases of Elder Abuse, the perpetrator is someone who is well known and trusted by the older person. They may be dependent on the abuser, often for care. It is also common for the abuser to depend on the support of the older person for accommodation and financial support. Sometimes the older person and abuser have a complex co-dependent relationship.

The abuser can be a partner, son, daughter, grandchild, in-law, friend or neighbour or even a professional carer. This can include someone who has Power of Attorney and uses that power to benefit themselves.

What are the indicators of abuse?

Elder abuse is often hidden. An old person may not identify what is happening to them as abuse. They may want to cover up the signs due to fear of what may happen or to 'protect' family.

The indicators of abuse could be:

- Unusual or inappropriate financial activities like money being inexplicably withdrawn from the banks.
- The use of a power of attorney for purposes other than which it was intended.
- Frequent and/or expensive gifts from an older person to their carer.
- Belongings going missing.
- A recent will or power of attorney has been made when the older person doesn't seem capable of understanding or making such documents.
- Irregular signatures on cheques.
- Someone using undue influence over an older person.
- Being prevented from seeing friends and family.
- Social isolation.
- Increasing depression and anxiety.
- In extreme cases, consistent physical injury or serious neglect.

What we can do about Elder Abuse?

Respect and equality for older people is a national issue. We all must do more to highlight and address Elder Abuse wherever we encounter it.

FMC is a not for profit organisation that has received support from Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation to provide a service that focuses on the prevention of elder abuse called Respecting Elders. It is a support and conflict resolution service. Its aim is to empower the older person to ensure that elder abuse will cease or is prevented.

The first step for anyone who is suspected of being abused is to break the silence. A phone call to a FMC counselor will start a process of consultation and support. If appropriate a family meeting or mediation will be arranged. The aim is to ultimately reinstate the elderly person's respect and allow them to live their life defined by their wishes.

Older people have given us a lifetime; we owe them our respect and care. It is everyone's responsibility to put an end to Elder Abuse.