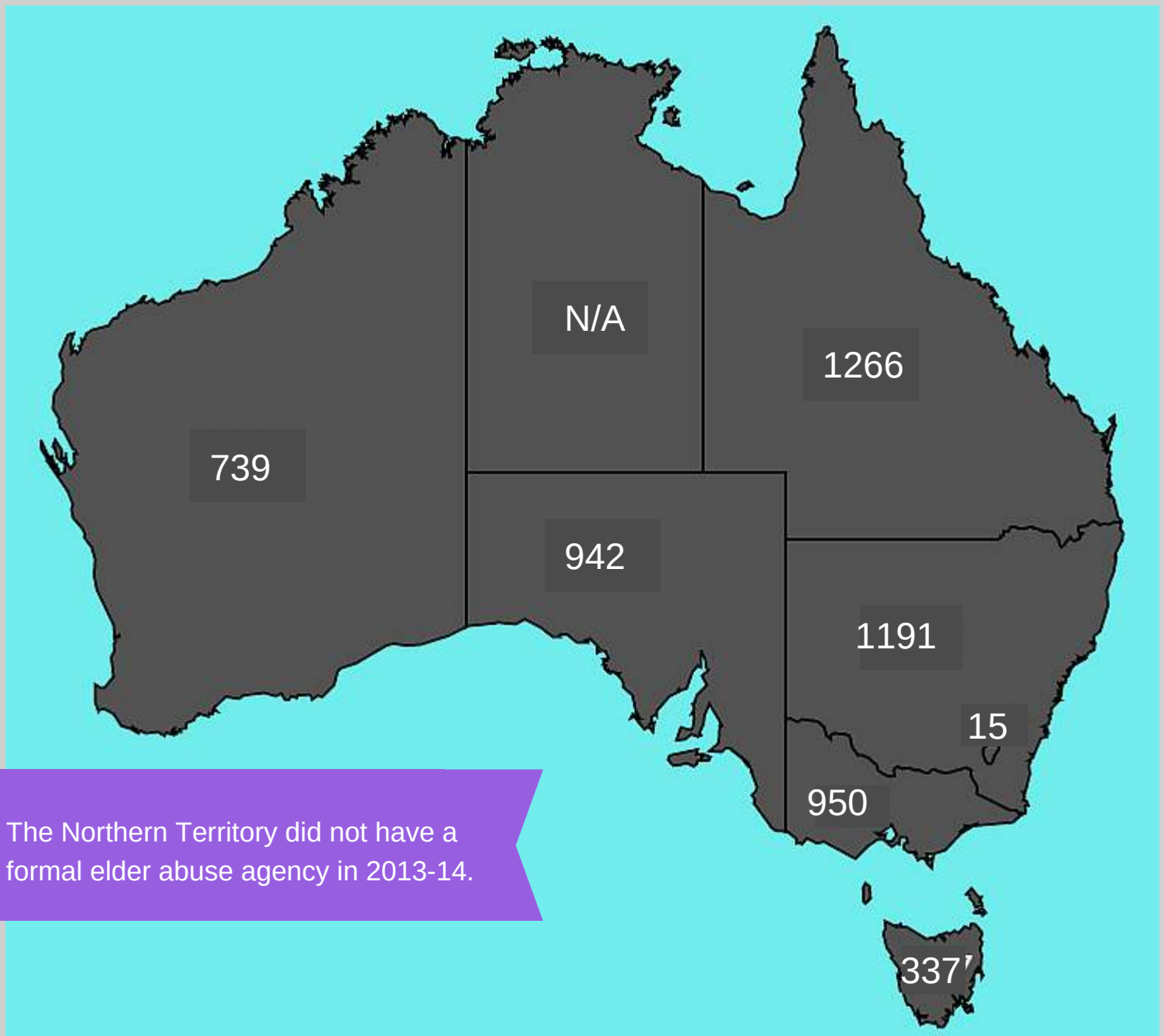


Elder Abuse National Annual Report 2013-2014



Number of Elder Abuse Information and Advocacy Cases by State



Elder abuse research indicates 4.6%* of older people may experience elder abuse. The figures above show a demonstrated need to raise the profile of elder abuse, to reach more vulnerable older people.

* Clare, M., Black Blundell, B., Clare, J. (2011) Examination into extent of elder abuse in Western Australia: A qualitative and quantitative investigation of existing data, University of Western Australia.

The World Health Organisation, defines elder abuse as 'a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person'

http://www.who.int/ageing/projects/elder_abuse/en/

Types of Elder Abuse

(with some typical examples)

Financial Abuse

- Forced changes to legal documents
- Misappropriation of money
- Denying access to personal funds
- Forging signatures
- Misuse of a bank card or Enduring Power of Attorney

Social Abuse

- Preventing contact with family or friends
- Cancelling services
- Withholding mail, or disconnecting the phone
- Living in, and taking control of the person's home
- Preventing the older person from engaging in cultural or religious practices

Physical Abuse

Slapping, hitting, kicking, tripping, shoving, burning or bruising

Physical restraint

Over or under-medicating

Handling an older person too roughly

Sexual Abuse

Sexual assault

Sexual harassment

Inappropriate touching

Sexually offensive language and/or materials and media

Making unwanted comments about an older person's body

Psychological Abuse

Verbal intimidation, humiliation, harassment and shouting

Threats of various forms

Withholding affection

Removal of decision making power

An enduring guardian acting inappropriately

Neglect

Preventing an older person from accessing aged care services

Receiving carers allowance but not providing care

Failing to provide adequate food, water, clothing, medical treatment, medication, warmth or shelter

Total Clients

5,440 Clients assisted

In 2013-14 agencies assisted **799** clients who identified as having special needs.

34% Culturally and linguistically diverse People

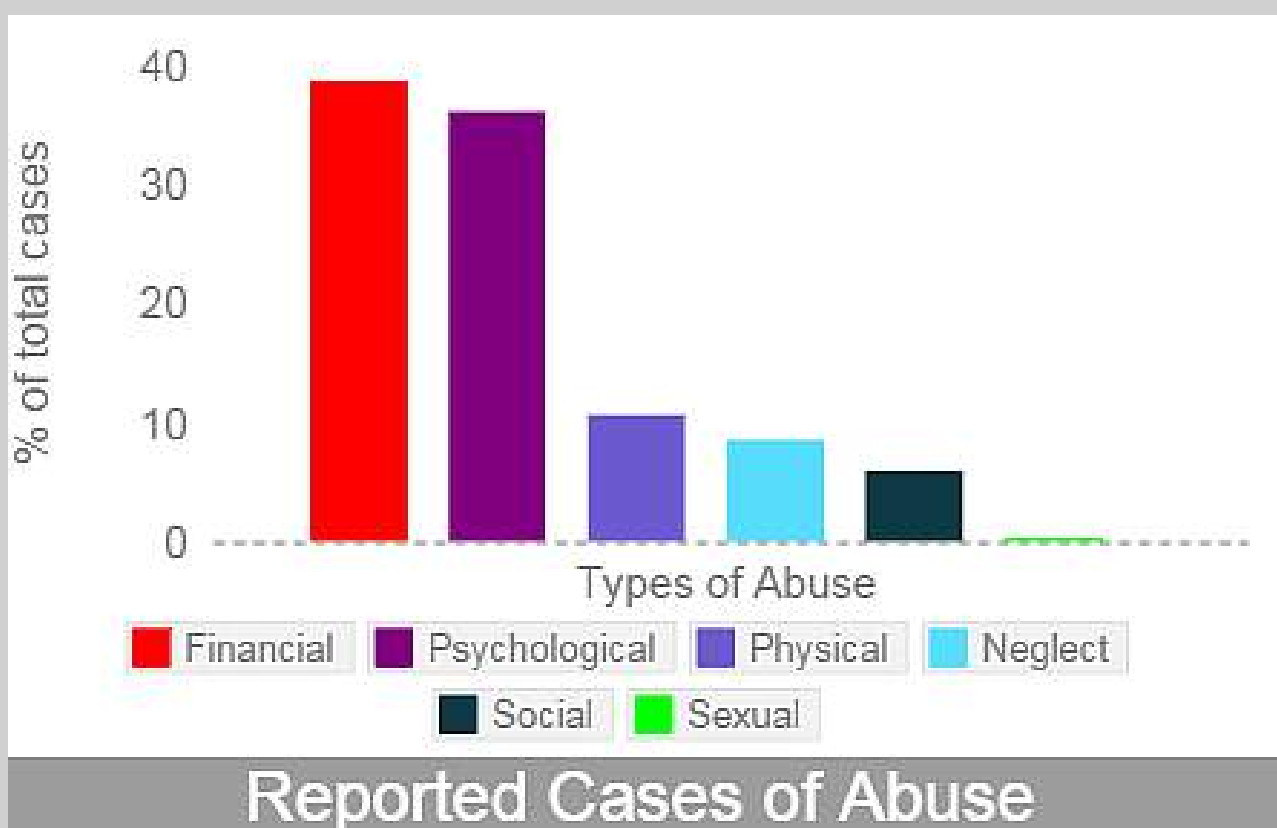
33% Rural and remote people

23% People with a disability

7% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

1% Care Leavers - people who have previously been in care

0.4% Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people



Many clients experience multiple types of elder abuse at the same time

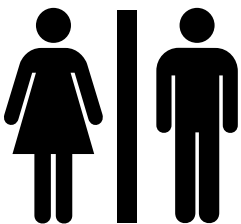
Profile of an Elder Abuse Perpetrator



Abuse often occurs behind closed doors, typically in an older person's home



54.5% of perpetrators were male and 45.5% were female



32.2% of perpetrators were the older person's son, and 30.7% were the older person's daughter



Substance abuse, drug addiction and mental health issues are often common in perpetrators

Advocacy and Information

1,616 Advocacy cases

3,824 Information calls



The Oxford English Dictionary defines an advocate as '*a person who puts forward a case on someone else's behalf*'.

Advocacy is the preferred model in elder abuse prevention, as it enables advocates to support the wishes of the older person whilst encouraging their autonomy under a model of empowerment.

In many cases clients are perfectly capable of self advocating, but may need extra information to be able to proceed. This information can include information about support services, information about rights and responsibilities, or often just someone to listen to their story.

Elder abuse agencies across Australia offer information services, and provide clients with all the information, resources, referrals and support they need to self advocate.

Education and Information Sessions

1,232 Sessions

25,736 Attendees

Raising awareness of how to recognise and respond to elder abuse is everyone's business, and a critical part of reducing abuse. Elder abuse agencies across Australia cover 7.69 million square kilometres to provide education and information sessions to:

- Staff working with older people
- Older community groups
- Aged care consumers and
- Special needs groups

People who attend elder abuse education sessions, report feeling:

- More empowered
- Able to recognise and respond to elder abuse
- Resourced with enough information to become an elder abuse champion



The Hon. Zoe Bettison, BA, MBA, Mp. Minister for Ageing launching 'Safeguarding the Rights of Older South Australians 2014-2021 Strategy'



Attendees at Residential Aged Care Session in Bunbury, WA

Elder Abuse Helplines

3,159 Calls to helplines

The Elder Abuse helplines are a quick and easy way for clients to access information, referrals and resources to address elder abuse.

Helpline Numbers

New South Wales: 1800 628 221

Queensland: 1300 651 192

Tasmania: 1800 441 169

Victoria: 1300 368 821

Western Australia: 1300 724 679



The Elder Abuse Helplines are designed to give older people an easier way to find and access services to help them address elder abuse.

The helplines are staffed by professional and experienced advocates who are able to take their information and refer them to advocates, legal services or other agencies who can help.

WEAAD

#elderabuse

On June 15 each year, agencies and groups around the world commemorate **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**, by coordinating events to raise awareness and gain support.



Case Studies



Anna and Spiro

Anna was 76 years old. Following the death of her husband 25 years ago, her son Spiro assumed control of her financial affairs. Anna was unaware he was dependent on alcohol and was facing a number of personal problems. He came to live with her temporarily, however he lost his job and was still living with Anna 15 years later. Whilst not having power of attorney, he had full control of Anna's finances through online and PIN access. He contributed little to the household and when he was drinking he became aggressive.

The advocate explained to Anna that she could cancel Spiro's access to her accounts and prevent him living with her. Anna was also given information about other services and support. Anna expressed her concern for her son and said she fears going into a nursing home if he no longer lived with her. Anna decided not to take any action against Spiro.

Fran and Alison

Fran lived in a retirement village and was friends with her neighbour Alison. Alison had been helpful, assisting Fran with gardening and shopping, but after a year Fran's care needs increased, and Alison was frustrated, and had become verbally abusive. Fran called an advocate for help. She explained the situation and expressed her fears at not having anyone to help her. The advocate explained that it was not ok to be abused, and discussed home care services.

Fran was supported by the advocate through the aged care assessment process and was eligible for a number of supports. Three weeks after speaking to the advocate she contacted the agency to let them know that once the carer stress was lifted off Alison they became firm friends again and she was also enjoying the company of the aged care staff who were assisting her.

Mary and Anne

Mary was an 80 year old woman who lived in her own home. Mary had some physical illnesses that made it difficult for her to go out so she was exploring the option of online shopping and banking.

Mary enlisted the help of her granddaughter Anne to set up her accounts and show her how to use the system. Anne was very helpful, and Mary was enjoying her new found online freedom, until she started noticing strange transactions on her account, and realised someone was taking her money.

Mary spoke to an advocate who assisted her in liaising with the bank, it was then she discovered that Anne was making online purchases with Mary's account. Mary did not want to press charges but instead accepted the advocate's offer for some training on online banking and internet security, and met with the bank to change her passwords. This allowed Mary to manage her own affairs without the need for help from family and friends.

Isla and Yvanna

Isla was 76 years of age and owned a large home. She wanted to downsize and mentioned this to her daughter, Yvanna, who suggested she pay to extend Yvanna's home and move in with her and her family. Without discussing the matter with anyone else Isla accepted her offer. The arrangement worked well until there was fighting within the family, and Isla felt isolated from her other two children, who were angry about the money spent on Yvanna's property.

One day Yvanna told Isla that she needed to find alternative accommodation. Isla felt rejected and didn't have enough money to purchase a new property. Yvanna would not give Isla any of the money she spent as she saw it as a gift from mother to daughter. Isla was a pensioner with limited funds and housing opportunities. She was referred to an advocate who linked her with housing and counselling services. Once settled, the advocate was able to assist her recover some of the money from her daughter. Had Isla received independent financial and legal advice prior to entering into the arrangement with her daughter, she would have been in a much better financial and emotional place.

2013 National Elder Abuse Conference

Each year there is a National Elder Abuse Conference held in Australia. The first was held in Brisbane in 2012, and the Second National Elder Abuse conference was held in Adelaide in 2013, hosted by Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS)



2013 Conference Presentations

available at http://www.sa.agedrights.asn.au/page/view_by_id/39

Practical Ideas for Building Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Capacity -
Jeanine Jones & Kaz Mackay

Five Gates to Justice - Assoc Prof Linda Starr

Seniors Creating Change - Sonya Mitchell

Financial Elder Abuse and the Financial Sector - Qld Issues, Initiatives, Incentives -
Les Jackson

Who's Doing What to Whom? The Evidence for Action - Jenny Blakey & Philippa
Campbell

The Effectiveness of Co-ordinated Inter-agency Response to Elder Abuse - Tara
Simpson

Elder Abuse in an International Context - Prof Simon Biggs

Sexual Assault and Older Women - Dr Catherine Barrett

Reflections on a Rural and Regional Response to the Abuse of Older Adults - Linda
Mills

It Began with a Phone Call to ARAS - Doris Gioffre & Jane Northey

Tasmanian Elder Abuse Help Line: Public Awareness is the Key to Success - Chrissy
Jamieson

Preventing Abuse of Aboriginal Elders - A South Australian Community
Development Project - Louise Herft

Two Dead Frankfurts and a Blob of Sauce. The Serendipity of Receiving Nutrition
and Hydration in Australian Residential Aged Care - Dr Maree Bernoth

Comparative Frameworks - Preventing and Prosecuting Elder Abuse - the US, UK,
Canada & Australia - Mark Crofton

How the Aged Care Sector can bring about a Zero Tolerance Environment - Susan
Emerson

Speech Notes for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier as Proxy to the
Minister for Health and Ageing - Leesa Vlahos

Contacts

ACT	ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service (ADACAS)	(02) 6242 5060 adacas@adacas.org.au
NSW	The Aged Rights Advocacy Service (TARS)	1800 424 079 tars@tars.com.au
	NSW Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit	1800 628 221 eahru@chcs.com.au
NT	Aged and Disability Advocacy Darwin	1800 812 953 info@dcls.org.au
QLD	Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU)	1300 651 192 eapu@community.org.au
SA	Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS)	(08) 8232 5377 aras@agedrights.asn.au
TAS	Advocacy Tasmania	(03) 6224 2240 advocacy@advocacytasmania.org.au
	Council on the Ageing (COTA)	(03) 6231 3265 admin@cotatas.org.au
VIC	Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV)	1300 368 821 info@seniorsrights.org.au
	Justice Connect - Senior's Law	1800 606 313 seniorslaw@justiceconnect.org.au
WA	Advocare Incorporated	(08) 9479 7566 rights@advocare.org.au
	Older People's Rights Service (OPRS)	(08) 9440 1663 admin@nsclegal.org.au
	Office of the Public Advocate WA (OPA WA)	1300 858 455 opa@justice.wa.gov.au



Advocare Incorporated compiled information from 10 elder abuse support agencies across Australia to prepare this report. Later versions of the Elder Abuse National Annual Report hope to include statistics and information from many more agencies working throughout Australia.

For any information about this report, please contact:

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