

# Communications Toolkit

## Stop Elder Abuse

[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse)



# Introduction

Elder abuse is a prevailing community, social, health and workforce issue. Globally the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates its prevalence in high and middle income countries at between 2-14%. It is the critical role of the community to work together to recognise and fight against Elder Abuse.

This communications toolkit is intended to provide organisations with materials that can be used to help spread the word about the issue of Elder Abuse across a range of communications channels, including websites, intranets, social media platforms, radio and electronic and printed newsletters.

We appreciate your assistance in promoting the Stop Elder Abuse message to ensure that members of the South Australian community are aware of the signs of Elder Abuse, understand that it can be stopped and know that they can access free and confidential information and support or make a report through the **South Australian Abuse Prevention Phone Line 1800 372 310** and **[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse)**.

## What is Elder Abuse?

Elder Abuse is an act that causes harm to an older person, carried out by someone the older person knows and trusts. This could be a family member, friend or carer. The harm could be accidental or deliberate. Elder Abuse can be physical, psychological, financial, social, neglect, sexual or chemical, with financial and emotional abuse often occurring together.

Around one in 20 older Australians is experiencing some form of abuse from a person they know and trust. The average age of the person being abused is 79-80 years.

In South Australia the Adult Safeguarding Unit reported\* that since its opening on 1 October 2019 until 30 June 2020:

- > 42% of reported abuse was financial.
- > 35% of reported abuse was emotional/psychological.
- > 53% of those experiencing abuse were female.\*\*
- > 27% of reported abuse was allegedly by adult sons.
- > 19% of reported abuse was allegedly by adult daughters.

\*South Australian Adult Safeguarding Unit Annual Report 2019-2020

\*\*Gender was not always identified.

## What has been done so far?

The South Australian Government is committed to raising awareness about elder abuse – helping the community to recognise the signs and focussing on prevention activities through implementing the *Strategy to Safeguard the Rights of Older South Australians 2014 – 2021 and Action Plan 2015 – 2021*.

In October 2015, the first Stop Elder Abuse campaign was launched to:

- > raise public awareness of the rights of older people, what Elder Abuse is, what the signs are and where to go for information and support; and
- > enable South Australians to feel confident about seeking help and information if they believe an older person's rights are not being respected.

The media campaign featured outdoor, digital, radio and press advertising across metropolitan and regional South Australia.

In 2016, in addition to the general public, the campaign focussed on those working in the health, legal and financial sectors who are often in a position to see the signs and do something to help.

The 2017 campaign, designed in consultation with volunteers and carers, used refreshed posters, postcards, wallet card, bus shelter advertising, newspaper and radio ads, and social media to reach out to volunteers and carers along with the general public.

In 2018, the Stop Elder Abuse campaign focussed on raising awareness amongst the general public. In addition, because 50% of cases were financial abuse, it worked with banks, credit unions and real estate agents to provide information and resources, for staff who may be in a position to notice changes in clients' behaviour consistent with possible financial abuse.

In 2019, the campaign reached out to hairdressers and beauty professionals who because of their close relationships with female clients are in a good position to notice signs of elder abuse and potentially do something about it.

In 2020 the Stop Elder Abuse campaign focused on the general community, with the message that now more than ever, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we should be looking out for signs of elder abuse and speaking up to help stop it.

This Communications Toolkit is a resource to help support ongoing promotion of this important message to the South Australian community, including the promotion of the SA Abuse Prevention Phone Line **1800 372 310** and [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse).

## How you can help

- > **Share materials and resources** – we have created a suite of materials for print and online mediums to promote the Stop Elder Abuse message and the phone line and webpage.
- > **Include in your communications** – we have drafted suggested text for inclusion in your communications to assist you with sharing the Stop Elder Abuse messages.
- > **Post and Tweet** – you can use our social media guide to help with promotions on your social media platforms. Use the hashtag **#stopelderabuse**
- > **Link to us** – we encourage you to link your website to the Stop Elder Abuse webpage.
- > **Share this document** – we welcome your support and encourage you to send this toolkit to any individuals and organisations who may also be interested in sharing information about the Stop Elder Abuse campaign.
- > **Keep us in the loop** – we would appreciate copies of any communications you distribute through your networks. Please email these to [officeforageingwell@sa.gov.au](mailto:officeforageingwell@sa.gov.au)

## Who should you target?

- > Older South Australians
- > South Australian community
- > Staff and management of service providers for older South Australians
- > Carers of older South Australians
- > Volunteers who interact with older South Australians
- > Older carers and older volunteers
- > Family, friends and neighbours of older South Australians

## Key messages

- > Older people have rights – to make their own decisions, to be safe, and to be treated with dignity and respect.
- > Fear, sadness and neglect can be signs of Elder Abuse.
- > Around one in 20 older Australians is experiencing some form of abuse from a person they know and trust.
- > If you have concerns about yourself or someone you know call the South Australian Abuse Prevention Phone Line **1800 372 310** for free confidential advice and support or to make a report, or visit [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse)

# Resources

## Newsletter article

### **Community Campaign to Uphold Older People's Rights** (294 words)

South Australians are being reminded that respecting the rights of older people is a critical step in tackling elder abuse. The state's annual Stop Elder Abuse community awareness campaign is now underway in newspapers, on radio, online, and through social media.

This year, the focus is on older people's rights – the right to safety, dignity and autonomy – to be safe, to be treated in a way that makes them feel worthwhile, and to be free to live the life they choose.

One in 20 older people in our community is experiencing some form of abuse from someone they know and trust – often a member of their own family.

In its annual report (1 October 2019 – 30 June 2020) South Australia's Adult Safeguarding Unit reported that where gender was identified, 53 per cent of cases were abuse of older women. Adult sons were allegedly the main abusers (27%); 42% of abuse was financial and 35% was emotional or psychological.

It is vital that families, friends and the broader community respect older people's rights and, if abuse is suspected, do something about it, in a way that upholds those rights.

#### **How do you know what to look for?**

Signs of elder abuse can be fear, sadness, and neglect.

Forms of abuse include financial, psychological, physical, social, neglect, sexual and chemical – such as over or under medication.

If you are being abused, or you believe someone else is, help is available.

You can seek free confidential advice and support or make a report to South Australia's Adult Safeguarding Unit by calling the SA Abuse Prevention Phone Line **1800 372 310**.

For information about South Australia's Stop Elder Abuse community awareness campaign, see [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse)

**Older people have rights. Spot the signs. Speak up. And help stop Elder Abuse.**

## Website text (long)

Around one in 20 older Australians is experiencing some form of abuse from a person they know and trust.

Older people have rights. Spot the signs. Speak up and help stop Elder Abuse. Call the SA Abuse Prevention Phone Line **1800 372 310** for free, confidential advice, support, or to make a report, or visit [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse)

## Website text (short)

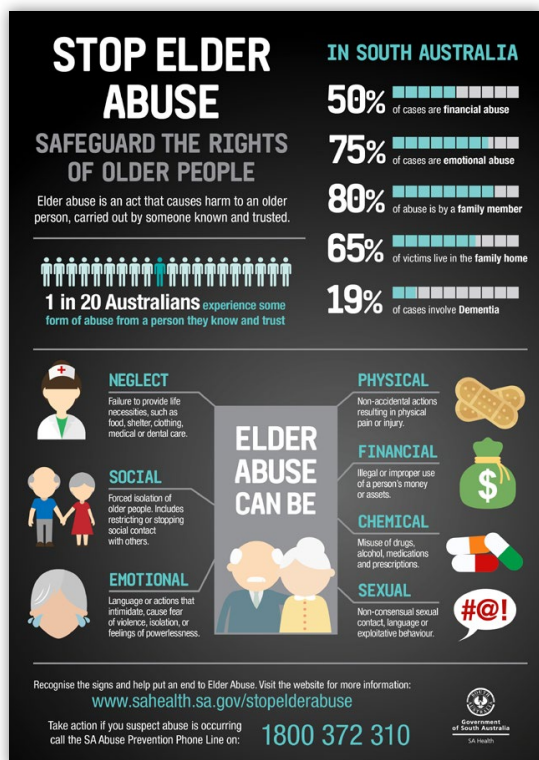
Older people have rights, speak up and help stop Elder Abuse. Call the SA Abuse Prevention Phone Line **1800 372 310** for free, confidential advice, support, or to make a report, or visit [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse)



# Promotional materials

You can download the Stop Elder Abuse campaign promotional materials online at [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse). Go to the 'Campaign and Community Awareness' page or contact Office for Ageing Well for hard copies.

Poster in A3 and A4 (infographic)



Wallet card 220mm x 90mm (folds down to 55mm x 90mm)

**Elder Abuse Can Be Stopped**

Take action if you suspect abuse is occurring – call the South Australian Abuse Prevention Line **1800 372 310**

The free and confidential Phone Line service is open Monday to Friday.

**Other confidential advice and support services:**

SA Police for emergency only <b>000</b>	Translating and Interpreting Services <b>131 450</b>
SA Police for non-urgent police assistance <b>131 444</b>	

To find out more, visit the website:  
[sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse)

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**Protect Your Rights**

Elder Abuse is an act that causes harm to an older person, carried out by someone they know and trust, such as a family member, friend or carer. The harm could be unintentional or deliberate.

Around 1 in 20 older Australians are experiencing some form of abuse.

**Elder Abuse can include:**

- intimidation or harassment
- isolation from family or friends
- skimming or denying access to or control of own money
- misusing Enduring Power of Attorney
- neglecting physical, health, social or emotional needs
- physical violence or restraint

**There is someone you can talk to.**

If you are concerned about Elder Abuse, call:

**South Australian Abuse Prevention Phone Line**  
**1800 372 310**

Trained staff provide free, culturally sensitive, confidential advice.

**Who can call the Phone Line?**

- Older people
- Family/friends
- Community members
- Workers and professionals

Callers can remain anonymous.

**In an emergency call 000.**

The Phone Line is a State Government initiative, funded through the Office for the Ageing.

[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse)

## Postcard A6 (male, female and infographic)



## Social media guide

You can use the text below to distribute the Stop Elder Abuse messages through your own social media platforms.

### Twitter

Older people have rights, speak up and help stop Elder Abuse call **1800 372 310** or visit [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse) **#stopelderabuse**

Spot the signs, know the signs of Elder Abuse and Speak Up call **1800 372 310** or visit [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse) **#stopelderabuse**

### Facebook

Around one in 20 older Australians is experiencing some form of abuse from a person they know and trust. Older people have rights. Spot the signs. Speak up and help stop Elder Abuse. Call the **SA Abuse Prevention Phone Line 1800 372 310** for free confidential advice and support or to make a report, or visit [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/stopelderabuse) **#stopelderabuse**

# Contact

Thank you for helping us to promote the Stop Elder Abuse message.

If you have any questions regarding this toolkit please contact:

Office for Ageing Well

SA Health

Email: [officeforageingwell@sa.gov.au](mailto:officeforageingwell@sa.gov.au)

Phone: (08) 8204 2420



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