

ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM

FACT SHEET

PREVENT ELDER ABUSE HAPPENING TO YOU

What is Elder Abuse?

The term “Elder Abuse” refers to situations where the rights of older adults are abused by people they trusted, such as family members or friends. Elder abuse can take the forms of:

- ❖ Financial or material abuse: For example, the use of an older person’s money or property without their permission
- ❖ Emotional or Psychological abuse: For example, verbal or physical threats, including threats of abandonment and intimidation; threats to harm others and pets; withdrawal of love and support
- ❖ Physical abuse: For example, slapping, punching, pushing, beating, burning and restraining
- ❖ Sexual abuse: For example, sex without consent, interference and harassment
- ❖ Social abuse: For example, restricting social freedom and isolating an older person from their family and friends
- ❖ Neglect: For example, failure to fulfil a commitment to provide assistance and support, such as neglecting to provide adequate food, shelter, care and emotional support.

Can you prevent elder abuse?

You can take action to protect yourself from experiencing elder abuse by:

Remaining active in your community

- ✓ Maintain contact with family and other important people in your life
- ✓ Develop and maintain new friendships outside of your family, for example, be involved in an arts, religious or sports/recreational group; attend courses at your local recreation centre or TAFE
- ✓ Be involved in your community, for example, be a volunteer at the local school or Community Centre; join the local Resident’s Committee or Nature Preservation Group

Planning for your own safety

- ✓ Make a list of five people you trust and can most rely on to support your best interests
- ✓ Keep the names and telephone numbers of these people handy
- ✓ Seek their support if you are experiencing fear or have other concerns
- ✓ Remember, “There is nothing so terrible that you can’t tell someone about it”.
- ✓ Arrange emergency procedures with these people and with other, for example, with your neighbours.

Remaining as independent as possible

- ✓ Take care of your own health
- ✓ Make your own enquiries about services and other help you may need
- ✓ Ask for help from family, friends and relevant services when you need it
- ✓ Be careful about giving another person access to your finances, for example, before arranging for someone else to have access your bank account and before lending your money or possessions
- ✓ Carefully consider all other options before deciding to accept support or care in exchange for sharing your home or relinquishing ownership of your assets.

Planning for your own future

- ✓ Seek independent advice before signing any documents including the sale of your property, your Power of Attorney, Enduring Power of Attorney and your Will
- ✓ Remain informed about your own finances, investments, property and assets
- ✓ Decide on your preferences regarding your future, for example, in relation to possible future accommodation and medical/health care
- ✓ Let the people you trust the most know about important decisions you have made in relation to your future.

What does Advocare's Abuse Prevention Program do?

Advocare's Abuse Prevention Program (APP) supports older adults who are being abused, or who are at risk of being abused, by someone with whom they are in a relationship of trust, such as family and friends. APP advocates work in consultation with the older adult, either directly, or with someone else the older person has chosen (their representative).

The APP advocates for older adults by:

- Providing them with information about their rights
- Assisting them to identify and understand the issues related to abuse of their rights
- Discussing information about options which they can implement to assert their rights
- Identifying and discussing consequences of actions they may consider
- Suggesting action they can take to stop abuse of their rights
- Providing them with appropriate advocacy support that enables them to have their rights met.

How do I contact Advocare's Abuse Prevention Program?

The advocates who work for the Abuse Prevention Program can be contacted by telephone on 9221 8699 during normal office hours (9 am to 5 pm week days). After hours and on weekends a telephone message can be left and an advocate will return you call within 24 hours. An advocate may arrange a visit with you at your home or in another suitable location.

For more information contact **Advocare**

Perth: (08) 9221 8599

Website: <http://www.iinet.net.au/~advocare>

Email: advocare@iinet.net.au

empowering people

Funded by the Home & Community Care Program