

MEDIA RELEASE

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All Australians Called Upon to End Elder Abuse

Leading elder abuse prevention organisation launches national campaign and website to provide information and practical advice to respond and prevent elder abuse

With the pandemic creating rising financial stress and more children likely to move back in with their elderly parents, or elderly parents moving in with the children, there are growing concerns about the potential for increases in elder abuse, says Australia peak elder abuse body.

Elder Abuse Action Australia says the elder abuse sector have been reporting a higher than usual demand in changes to wills and to bank accounts, along with a 40% increase of calls to at least one state helpline.

“Elder abuse is everyone’s business, we all have a part to play,” says EAAA co-chair Diedre Timms. “We believe around 10% of older Australians experience elder abuse – nearly half a million people. So it’s a huge concern that the current situation with COVID-19 may be increasing its occurrence.

“We need to lift the veil on this previous closed-door issue and to do that, we are asking the community to become aware of what constitutes elder abuse and then to take action. This is a community wide issue and we need everyone’s commitment to eradicate elder abuse in Australia.”

To help empower the community to recognise, prevent and respond to elder abuse, EAAA has launched the first ever national campaign to shine a light on elder abuse. The campaign includes the launch of a new national community resource and website, Compass.

The Compass website provides a broad range of information and resources for Australians to better understand what elder abuse is, what it might look like, and what can be done about it.

It includes dedicated sections for people experiencing elder abuse, and those witnessing elder abuse, including definitions, signs and behaviours, tips on how to respond and prevent it, and a service directory of authorised and qualified providers across Australia to find appropriate help.

It’s the first step in the EAAA’s mission to eradicate elder abuse.

“Elder abuse is confronting. As it often happens behind closed doors to members of the community that don’t have a voice, or don’t realise that how they are being treated is maltreatment, it can be difficult to recognise. But there are signs and steps that can be taken. Older people need to know they are not alone.

“Compass is a first in that it provides the information and tools to do just that, with practical advice and resources for anyone in Australia to take action,” Timms continued.

“Given the increasing reports of elder abuse due to COVID-19, we are pleased to have launched Compass at such a critical time. Elder abuse in all its forms must be stopped.



“We encourage the community to use this resource to help protect the social, physical, financial and emotional wellbeing of our elderly citizens.”

If you want to talk to someone call the National Elder Abuse Helpline: 1800 ELDERHelp (1800 353 374)

[ENDS]

ABOUT Compass

Compass is a national website to empower the community to navigate elder abuse in Australia. Compass aims to create a national focus on elder abuse by raising awareness of this growing social issue, and simplify the process of connecting people to services and information tackling elder abuse.

Compass has been created by Elder Abuse Action Australia (EAAA) with funding from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department as part of the National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians 2019-2023.

The resources and information provided by is supported by the elder abuse sector, including peak bodies, advocates, non for profits, service providers and community groups.

<https://compass.info/>

ABOUT EAAA

The Elder Abuse Action Australia (EAAA) is the national advocate for eliminating elder abuse.

Funded by the Attorney General's office, EAAA aims to address elder abuse and protect the rights of older Australians at both the grassroots and macro level.

EAAA believes in the rights of older Australians and our actions seek to eliminate elder abuse. Our campaigns, advocacy and policy development creates positively impact the lives of older Australians and their families, our communities and broader society.

We work with State and Territory bodies and authorities, sharing and co-ordinating information to develop a national understanding, framework and response for elder abuse.

Our mission

Be a national voice for action that eliminates elder abuse

Our vision

A society that respects and values older Australians, and is free from elder abuse

Our commitment

We are committed to:

- Social justice and the rights of older people
- Respect for difference and inclusion
- Community collaboration to eliminate elder abuse
- Accountability and integrity
- Evidence-based practice and research
- Innovation and forward thinking

<https://eaaa.org.au/>

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