

QLD Focus

Elder Abuse Prevention Unit Newsletter

Edition 12

July 2007

Peer Support is all about Networking

EAPU's Peer Support Network has continued its success of last years teleconference 'Duty of Care Issues', by solicitor Mr Brian Herd, one of Brisbane's Elder Law specialists, by following on this year with the second instalment in this series of client care issues. We were honoured back in April to have the Adult Guardian, Ms Diane Pendergast from the Office of the Adult Guardian in Brisbane, give up her time to facilitate a one hour session for all our workers around the state. The role of the Office of the Adult Guardian is to protect the rights and interests of adults who have impaired capacity.

The teleconference was titled 'Responding to Abuse of Older People with Impaired Capacity,' and we received a great response with over 16 sites participating from Mt Isa to Roma to our latest recruits from Thursday Island. The participants were asked to submit questions to the unit that would be answered by Ms Pendergast in the hour allocated. This proved to be a very successful formula indeed, with 20 questions answered in the hour and information saturation levels at their peak by the end! It was also our luck that Ms Pendergast had offered to formulate all the answers to the questions into a fact sheet that we would be able to distribute to all our Peer Support Network workers, especially those that were not able to attend the teleconference. As a result of the success of the information we are now able to use the fact sheets in our training sessions.

Our next Peer Support Teleconference will be held in August and we are looking forward to hearing from Mr Darren Clark from the Guardianship and Administration Tribunal. This will be our third instalment in our series and we are hoping to continue throughout the year, with the goal of acquiring a library of fact sheets for distribution. If you are an isolated worker who is keen to learn more skills in responding to elder abuse in your community then we are looking for you! Membership is free and you can contact Trish McArthur, our project support officer on (07) 3250 1955 or email trish.mccarthur@lccq.org.au to register.

Claudia Ferrante

Senior Project Officer—EAPU

**One cannot consent to creep when
one has an impulse to soar**

—Hellen Keller



This Issue

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2

Editorial 3

Grant for Preventing Abuse of Older Abo- 3

QPS—State Coordinator for Senior's Issues 4

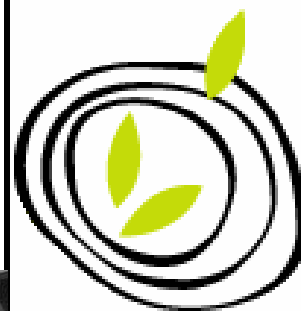
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren 4

Specialist Legal Services to Combat Elder Abuse 5

Research Roundup 6

Media Overview 7

Upcoming Events 8



**ELDER ABUSE
HELPLINE**

1300 651 192



South of the Border for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2007



With the second year and the second success of International World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) 15th of June 2007 over, once again the EAPU has been successful in contributing to the global fight on elder abuse! I was south of our great border in NSW to participate in some interstate/cross border relations with the Northern Rivers Social Development Council (NRSDC) in Ballina. The council had recently received funding from the NSW Attorney Generals Department to support an 'Abuse of Older Adults Prevention Project' with the goal of researching and ascertaining from the community of the Northern Rivers, a framework for identifying and responding in situations where older people are considered at risk of abuse. The NRSDC held a forum in Ballina on the 14th of June for local service providers to discuss a range of issues surrounding the development of a prevention project. Over 60 service providers from the local area, which included, Lismore, Tweed Heads, Ballina and Byron Bay were invited to attend a full day forum and afternoon workshop to brainstorm their responses.

The EAPU was invited as one of a few key note speakers to present our unit's model and lend our expertise to the afternoon workshops. I was delighted to be able to participate and indeed help captivate the audience of eager learners. Along with myself, a former work colleague from the Abuse Prevention Unit in WA, Mrs Maureen Sellick was also invited to present the Western Australian model. Associate Professor from the School of Social Work and Social Policy at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Mr Gerry Naughtin was also invited to give an international perspective on elder abuse. Mr Naughtin is reverend as one of Australia's foremost researchers in elder abuse and as such it was an honour to be able to present alongside him. The Northern Rivers very own Superintendent of Police, Mr Brian Lyons finished off the morning presentations with information about the role of the police in the area. In the afternoon, the service providers were split into groups and each speaker was designated a group with the intention of assisting and lending some knowledge to problem solving questions pertaining to how best to utilise the funding for an appropriate response to elder abuse in the area. I was able to assist in providing tips on what works and what doesn't, when it comes to dealing with elder abuse in the community. The EAPU commends The Northern Rivers Abuse of Older Adults Prevention Project, as it is believed to be the first funded elder abuse initiative in NSW in recent years. We look forward to continuing our relationship in the future.

Back in Queensland on WEAAD, this year our funding body the Department of Communities, Office for Seniors, put on a forum on the day for government officials and other dignitaries. There were some very important speakers which included the findings of research presented by the University of Queensland on financial abuse amongst older adults who lack capacity. Maureen Sellick from WA was also able to come along on the day and we were honoured to host her and help her to establish some Queensland contacts. The day worked out magically, our helpline was running hot throughout the day and we were able to once again successfully increase awareness of elder abuse.

Claudia Ferrante
Senior Project Officer—EAPU



From the Editor:

Domnica Alexa (domnica.alex@lccq.org.au)

Winter is here.. And we thought that we'd miss it this year. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2007 has been a huge success. Events were held around Australia : Queensland held a forum on Friday 15th June hosted by the Department of Communities, New South Wales also held a forum in Ballina, Victoria and South Australia also held major forums with noted guest speakers.

To add to all the excitement the Senior's Legal and Support Service Centres had their launch this quarter with Minister Pitt present. The Senior's Legal and Support Service is a pilot project operating in five locations throughout Queensland with solicitors and social workers working together to provide seniors with a holistic approach in gaining legal advice and support.

Domnica Alexa
Project Officer

\$ 100,000 grant to help prevent abuse of older Aboriginals

Mr John Kobelke
Minister for Police, Emergency Services;
Community Development, Water Resources, Sport and Recreation

18/04/07

An education program aiming to help Aboriginal health workers reduce the mistreatment of older people will receive nearly \$100,000 in State Government funding.

Community Safety Minister John Kobelke said the grant would go to Marr Mooditj Foundation Inc and Curtin University of Technology to fund research and development into a pilot training program for staff working with Aboriginal people in Perth.

The aim was to enable the health workers to identify and respond to cases of mistreatment of older Aboriginal people in the community.

"Elder abuse is becoming a significant issue, both in Australia and overseas," Mr Kobelke said.

"There is a lack of research on the process of ageing and being elderly in Aboriginal Australia and it is essential for government and the community to work together to develop effective policies to tackle this problem."

The 2002 Gordon Inquiry highlighted the need to address the vulnerability of adults in Aboriginal communities most affected by problems of abuse.

A report into elder abuse in Aboriginal communities, commissioned by the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) in 2005, also revealed significant concerns about mistreatment and neglect of some older people.

The OPA study showed financial abuse was one of the most common types, with older people being harassed for money on pension day, being physically abused, robbed and neglected by those receiving financial support to care for them. It recommended further training and resources for Aboriginal staff encountering such situations.

Research for the culturally appropriate education program will be conducted by Curtin University's Department of Social Work and Social Policy in partnership with OPA and Marr Mooditj Foundation Inc, an accredited Aboriginal health training organisation.

The project will be conducted in three phases - analysis of the current situation; development and trial of a pilot program; and evaluation. It is expected to take up to two years.

Minister's office - 08 9222 9211

Qld Police appoints State Coordinator for Seniors Issues

By Sergeant Rodney Bell

Queensland Police Service

A state coordinator for seniors issues has been appointed within the Queensland Police Service to address issues of crime prevention and fear of crime within the seniors community.

The appointment was a key recommendation of the Queensland Seniors Taskforce Report which was tabled in Parliament in November 2006. All 17 recommendations were endorsed by the Government.

Sergeant Rodney Bell, who has spent the past 5 years in the State Crime Prevention Unit, 2 years as Neighbourhood Watch State Coordinator, is now using his skills to coordinate seniors safety initiatives within the Police Service. Sergeant Bell has extensive experience in community crime prevention initiatives.

Sergeant Bell has been a member of the Police Service for 11 years and has worked in a number of roles, including State Liaison Officer for the Safety House Program. He has been heavily involved in major community safety projects such as the 'Five Ways to Safety' Project and the state-wide implementation of Watch Out! a Junior Neighbourhood Watch initiative.

In this new role, Sergeant Bell will be responsible for informing internal policy and crime prevention initiatives affecting seniors, as well coordinating bi-annual seniors forums.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Julie Argeros

Senior Project Officer—Seniors Enquiry Line & Time for Grandparents Program

Seniors Enquiry Line (SEL) is a Queensland Government Department of Communities funded program, auspiced by Lifeline Brisbane to provide information and referrals to older Queenslanders, their families, friends, carers and service providers. Since its inception in August 1999, Information/Support Officers at SEL have increasingly been called up to provide information and referrals to grandparents who are raising grandchildren. SEL started collecting statistical data on the number of grandparent calls on 1 July 2004. By 30 June 2006 SEL had received 1157 enquiries from grandparents.

In recognition of the importance of supporting grandparents who are raising grandchildren, SEL received funding from the Department of Communities to improve grandparent's access to information and referrals through its existing telephone service, website and the Time for Grandparents program. In October and November 2006, SEL carried out a Queensland-wide consultation process with grandparents and service providers, to identify the information and referral needs of grandparent carers.

The report documenting this process and findings is available by phoning SEL on 1300 135 500. SEL is currently updating its website to include specific resources for grandparents in Queensland. The site will also include an interactive, monitored bulleting board and a searchable directory of resources. SEL Information/Support Officers have a wide knowledge base about the issues that are pertinent to grandparents raising grandchildren and the services and support available.

Specialist Legal and Support Services to Combat Elder Abuse

The Honourable Warren Pitt
Minister for Communities,
Disability Services, Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

19 June 2007

A \$1.9 million initiative to provide free assistance for seniors concerned about elder abuse, mistreatment or financial exploitation was launched in Brisbane today.

Seniors Minister Warren Pitt said abuse of the elderly was a growing concern, which had serious consequences for the health and wellbeing of older Queenslanders.

“For this reason we have established Seniors Legal and Support Services in Cairns, Townsville, Hervey Bay, Toowoomba and Brisbane as part of a one-year pilot program to target elder abuse,” Mr Pitt said.

“While we already provide a broad range of services and support for seniors, a need was identified for a specialist seniors’ legal and support service, particularly with the increase in financial abuse.

“The Seniors Legal and Support Services will ensure a comprehensive response by providing free access to legal information and advice, short-term counselling, individual advocacy, court support, and community education.”

Mr Pitt said the Seniors Legal and Support Services would build on existing infrastructure and expertise provided by community legal centres and employ a mix of solicitors and social workers.

“Elder abuse is a serious concern — and the Queensland Government is serious about addressing it,” he said.

The most reliable Australian studies estimate that between three to seven per cent of seniors are affected by elder abuse, while the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit has estimated financial abuse losses of more than \$8 million in Queensland alone, between November 2002 and June 2005.

“These new Seniors Legal and Support Services will act as a key information and referral point, linking seniors with other legal, advocacy and consumer and support services,” Mr Pitt said.

“Seniors will have access to assistance via centre-based appointments, telephone support, home visits, or outreach to other safe locations.

“The service will also undertake community education about preventing elder abuse, legal rights and avenues for addressing matters of concern.

“The new Seniors Legal and Support Services will make a big difference when they open in early July 2007,” he said.

Media contact: Joe Begley 3235 4280

Research Roundup

Citizenship in Australia: An Indigenous Perspective

(M. Dodson, (1997), extract from speech to Culture and Citizenship Conference, 1996)

This article addressed and raised some of the issues faced by Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander people with regards to rights and “citizenship”. The key concept was that of a new concept of citizenship and the underlying premise that with white settlement there was “no law, language, culture or decision-making structures” that existed.

The history of Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander people pre-1967 was one in which they were not considered as human beings (let alone have citizenship rights). This meant that they could not travel within certain regions, gain education, and had to have permission to marry. They were also not counted as part of a census of the Australian population. “Citizenship” rights could be gained through proving assimilation into the “white” culture, which inherently meant that one had to deny their identity and heritage.

In 1967 a law was passed that abolished much of the blatant discriminatory legislation which was previously imposed on Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander people. However, to date many of the changes have not taken effect to a significant level to improve the standard of living and attitude towards Indigenous people, their rights and culture.

The Mabo decision by the High Court recognised that there was an existing structure in place prior to white settlement. This was the first time since 1788 that some acknowledgement was given to “the existence Indigenous politics and social organisations”.

The article also argues against three common expressions which are often used to oppose claims supporting the formation of Indigenous “systems and structures”.

1. Indigenous cultures, structures and law no longer are at a level where maintaining them is legitimate.
2. Recognising Indigenous structures and law would threaten the stability of mainstream Australia.

The concept that Australians should all be treated equally. This issue does not acknowledge the point that the land belongs to Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander people and that decision-making processes about the land should include significant input from them.

In conclusion, major reforms need to take place for the status of Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander people in Australia to be acknowledged.

“The only limitations are those we create, the only boundaries those we draw and the only future is that we make” - Gary Andrews

Media Overview



Santoro review a "whitewash" http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/santoro-review-a-whitewash/2007/03/27/1174761474145.html?page=fullpage	The Age	27 Mar. 07
Rock Elders Aim for chart success http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/6549333.stm	BBC News	13 Apr. 07
Scams against elderly on rise http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,21567663-3102,00.html	Courier Mail	17 Apr. 07
\$89,000 grant helps to fund help for victims of elder abuse http://www.canada.com/vancouvernews/news/westcoastnews/story.html?id=ab06f419-4ad3-417c-aa7d-c82736c19213	The Vancouver Sun	17 Apr. 07
Elderly being abused http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/sundaystartimes/auckland/4037090a6016.html	Eastern Courier	25 Apr. 07
Law change urged on hell for elderly http://www.thestandard.com.hk/news_detail.asp?pp_cat=11&art_id=43311&sid=13259184&con_type=3	The Standard	30 Apr. 07
Abuse of elderly a "national scandal" http://www.stv.tv/content/news/main/display.html?id=opencms:/archive/news/20070205/Abuse_of_the_elderly_a_xnational_scandal	STV.TVF	30 Apr 07
Managing Aged Care http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=5787	Online Opinion	1 May 07
A new initiative hopes to decrease senior financial abuse http://www.fox11az.com/news/topstories/stories/KMSB_20070508_ab_seniorabuse.4e6a5914.html	Fox11AZ	8 May 07
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day gets Four Seasons backing http://www.healthcarerepublic.com/news/PressRelease/660907/World-Elder-Abuse-Awareness-Day-gets-Four-Seasons-backing/	Healthcare Republic	30 May 07
700000 elderly abused "at home or in care" http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/06/11/nold111.xml	Telegraph.co.uk	11 Jun 07
Kentucky State offers Elder Abuse Awareness Licence Plates http://www.emaxhealth.com/28/12393.html	eMaxHealth	14 Jun 07
Comic Relief shows numbers of older people abused at home http://media.netpr.pl/notatka_79343.html	PR Newswire	14 Jun 07
Council holds forum on elder abuse issue http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/06/18/1954177.htm?site=midnorthcoast	ABC – North Coast	18 Jun 07
New Senior's Legal Service to help prevent Elder Abuse http://media-newswire.com/release_1052575.html	Media-Newswire.com	19 Jun 07

Upcoming Events

Cognitive Aging Conference in The Land Down Under

12-15 July 2007

Website: www.cos.gatech.edu/cac

4th IAS Conference

22-25 July 2007

Website: www.ias2007.org

2nd Healthcare Without Walls: Delivering the Best Care in the Best Place

2-3 August 2007

Sebel and Citigate, Brisbane

PH: 02 4960 8576

Email: chage.champions@bigpond.com

Website: www.changechampions.com.au

Take 2—Grandparents as Parents

19 August 2007, 10:00 am–1:00 pm

Noosa Library, Wallace Drive, Noosaville

PH: (07) 5442 4411

Email: jwalch@noosa.qld.gov.au

Family Law Information Workshop

22 August 2007, 1:00–3:30 pm

George Street Neighbourhood Centre, Mackay

PH: (07) 4953 1211

Email: admin@mrclc.com.au

Australian's Aging Population Summit 2007

28-29 August 2007

The Sebel and Citigate, Brisbane

PH: 02 9080 4349

Email: molly.markwell@informa.com.au

Website: www.informa.com.au/ageing

Breakfast Colloquium

5 September, 7 November,

UQ Australasian Centre on Aging

Website: www.uq.edu.au/cfha/index.html?page=9185

Senior's Expo

Bracken Ridge, Queensland

PH: 3261 5045

2nd National Men's Shed Conference

13-14 Sept 2007

Manly Pacific Hotel, NSW.

Website: www.menshed.org.au

7th Annual Aging and Law Conference

11-13 October 2007

Doubletree Hotel, Arlington, VA, USA

Website: www.aarp.org/nltp

8th Asia/Oceania AAG Regional congress of Gerontology

22–25 October 2007

Beijing, China

Email: aog2007@sino-meetings.com or
congress2007@pintree.com

Website: www.aog2007.org

Queensland Community Care Conference

8-9 November 2007

Radisson Resort, Gold Coast

PH: 07 3725 5555

Email: taniaw@acqi.org.au

60th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America

15-19 November 2007

San Francisco, USA

Website: www.geron.org

40th Annual AAG National Conference 2007

21-23 November 2007

Hilton Adelaide, South Australia

Website: <http://www.aag.asn.au/conferences/conference2007.htm>

DATE CLAIMERS:

Senior's Week QLD

18 - 26 August

International Day of Older People

1 October

EAPU hopes you have enjoyed the 3rd edition of "Queensland Focus" for 2007. If you wish to become an online recipient please email the EAPU to join the mailing list.

The Elder Abuse Prevention Unit is funded by the Queensland Government Department of Communities and operates under the auspice of Lifeline Brisbane.

Editors Note: Opinions expressed in this edition "Queensland Focus", do not necessarily reflect those of The Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU). Articles in this newsletter may be used with the permission of the contributing author.



© Elder Abuse Prevention Unit 2007

For more information please contact:

Elder Abuse Prevention Unit

PO Box 108 Fortitude Valley Q 4006

Phone: (07) 3250 1955

HELPLINE: 1300 651 192

Fax: (07) 3250 1929

Email: eapu@lccq.org.au