

Edition 28
March 2012

QLD Focus

UnitingCare Community Elder Abuse Prevention Unit

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Headin' Out West Again

With summer temperatures soaring into the forties it's a bit hard to start thinking about travelling too far away from the cooling breezes of the Bay, but unfortunately our calendar fills up at an alarming rate and those of us who don't plan, don't go. In the interests of greater efficiency we have tweaked the areas we cover and Andrea will now service the Central and Central West areas leaving me with the South West, the North West and the Wide Bay area. Maya will continue to cover the North, from Bowen upwards.

I was able to travel quite a bit in 2011, visiting much of the South West and making an inaugural trip to Mount Isa and Cloncurry.

I would very much like to come out to Mount Isa again this year, maybe in September, when any lingering summer floodwaters have receded and I may be able to get out to Camooweal and even Burketown, Normanton and Karumba. I would also love to visit Dajarra, Boulia and Bedourie. Such a big trip requires a brilliant itinerary and planning needs to start well in advance!

I also plan to make a few trips to the Fraser Coast to meet with service providers and community groups to raise awareness of elder abuse.

If you would like a session on elder abuse for your staff, wherever you are, please call or e-mail us so that the planning can begin! (07) 3867 2525.

eapu@uccommunity.org.au

If there are any events on, such as HACC Forums, multi-disciplinary meetings or expos, please let us know-they can afford a great opportunity to meet more service providers, especially those of you who work in remote areas.

Talking of planning, preparing for the future is something we all need to do as we get older, and a lot of us are probably guilty of adopting a "she'll be right" mindset, which is all very well, until something goes wrong. We all need to make a will and keep it up to date, sign an enduring power of attorney, ensuring that we read every single word of the small print on the form, think about who'll care for us, if anyone, when we get dementia, and keep the dialogue ongoing with our families. I often remember talking to a distressed older woman who revoked her enduring power of attorney because her daughter was digging in to her savings, but the woman didn't tell anyone she had revoked the epoa so the daughter blithely carried on helping herself.

Betty Davis (a movie star from the forties and fifties) famously said that "old age ain't for sissies" and how right she was. It ain't.

Enough from me-I look forward to meeting some of you this year.

By Rose Marwick

ELDER ABUSE HELPLINE



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Editorial

*By Rose Marwick
Trainer & Project Officer*

Greetings to you all,

It is shaping up to be a busy year for us with elder abuse increasingly on people's minds. Our help line is always busy and we are often left shaking our heads at the deliberate cruelty some families inflict on their older relatives.

First, though, we would all like to extend our sympathy to those of you who have been dealing with floods and more floods. It's hard to imagine how unpleasant and heartbreaking it must be, and our hearts go out to you.

As we are learning from recent natural disasters such as the Victorian Bushfires and the Christchurch earthquake the incidence of domestic violence increases in the aftermath as people struggle to deal with stresses they can't contain. There may well be an increase in elder abuse, although of course it's often kept under wraps and is hard to detect. It's a good time to keep it on our radar, along with everything else.

There is much happening in the world of elder abuse this year. Les, our coordinator has recorded an interview for the ABC and the spotlight has been on financial abuse in the money section of the Courier Mail recently. We have finally completed our protocols, which are available to anyone wishing to set up protocols for elder abuse. Please ring or e-mail us if you would like a copy and we will be more than happy to send one out.

We are busily preparing for our first National Conference which will be held at the Brisbane Convention Centre in June, just before World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) on the 15th. The poster is on page 5. We have some excellent speakers booked, two from overseas, and the meeting will be focussed on new directions in elder abuse. Registration is up and running on our web site and we hope that some of you (or all of you, even better) will be able to attend. Get in early-there is a discounted rate for early birds.

In this issue we have a terrific piece on a reconciliation launch, held recently at Southbank, from our beautiful Aboriginal project officer, Dulcie Bronsch. There's a note from QADA (Qld Aged and Disability Advocacy) seeking expressions of interest for their upcoming road –shows where they will be covering capacity issues and ending the sessions with a mock tribunal hearing. Definitely sign up for that-they plan to cover much of the State. Don't forget the Uniting Care Elder Abuse Survey-anyone can take part and the more the better. There's a Victims of Crime one as well.

You might want to pencil in March 12 for our next teleconference, between 1 and 2pm as usual. The speaker will be Mark Philips from the Office of the Adult Guardian.

That's more than enough from me, if there is anything happening around elder abuse in your region, please let us know.

Take good care.

Is this happening on a street near you?

*By Monica Shore
Seniors Legal and Support Service*

Our service can provide free information, advice and support for seniors concerned about elder abuse, mistreatment or financial exploitation.

The Solicitor at each office can provide free information and advice on your legal rights, and can assist with drafting letters, enduring powers of attorney and perusing contracts, such as entry contracts for Aged Care Facilities.

The Social Worker in each team works with clients in the context of their environment and social systems at critical points to alleviate disadvantage, to promote social justice, problem solving in human relationships, and empowerment for clients, their families and carers.

Social Workers provide information, short-term counselling, emotional and practical support to clients and if needed to their concerned family members, friends, neighbours and carers provided there is no identified legal conflict of interest. Our service will also work along side of other community organisations to provide a holistic individualised service.

Social Workers are also able to provide information and practical assistance for QCAT (Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal) matters with regards to financial administration and guardianship applications and/or reviews.

Social Workers engage with other community workers and organisations to deliver education sessions, improve the social environment for older people and to maximise life potential, especially in regard to social isolation.

Evidence-based practice and research informs advocacy for the pursuit of social justice and changes to social structures and policies in order to promote social inclusion and redress social disadvantage.

Every situation is listened to and assessed individually in a caring and compassionate manner; we take phone appointments, in office appoint-

ments or can visit clients in their homes should they not be able to travel.

Seniors Legal and Support Service is funded by the Queensland Department of Communities. For further information or to make an appointment please contact The Advocacy and Support Centre on 1300 008 272, (Ipswich) 3812 7000, (Toowoomba) 4616 9700.

Case Study

The daughter of an elderly woman was referred to and booked an appointment with the SLASS Social Worker after approaching many organisations for help but not receiving any practical assistance. She was extremely worried about her mother whose mental and physical state had deteriorated to a point where she 'thought mum was going to die'. Mum had been 'caring' for her husband of many years who had, over the past couple of years become increasingly abusive to mum. They lived in a 'granny flat' on the daughter's property, with the daughter 'hiding' mum in the main house during periods of violence. During the assessment, various levels of abuse by the husband were identified – financial (compulsive gambling), sexual (demanding), emotional (demand that soiled bedding was changed during the night), physical (poking with walking stick and pushing over), verbal (obscene name calling). Mum held the Enduring Power of Attorney for her husband, but was unable to move him into nursing home care due to his behaviour (who would put up with it) and his unwillingness to move out. The mother lived in extreme fear, and wished to divorce her husband.

Prioritisation of needs, current rights and future opportunities were discussed and an action plan was developed, which involved extensive referrals and interactions with broader community services. The SLASS Solicitor informed the family of their legal rights and obligations and was available to advise and enact legislative documentation as required.

(continued page 4)

Is it happening on a street near you? (cont)

By Monica Shore
Seniors Legal and Support Service

(from page 3)

The Social Worker made a referral to the Domestic Violence Service for assistance to apply for an 'urgent order' requesting an 'ouster order' and representation in court. An appointment, application and court appearance occurred on that very day. The 'urgent order' was not granted, however during the subsequent court appearance the 'ouster order' was granted. This was only able to occur due to the location of suitable accommodation for the husband, where the staff had experience in dealing with challenging behaviours. An urgent QCAT application was also sought and granted for Adult Guardianship which appointed external decision making for 'where to live', and Public Trustee was appointed for financial management. Referrals were later made to Legal Aid for property settlement, Public Trustee for Will making; and Psychology for counselling.

During a follow up phone call, the family had been able to realise that they 'need not bear the responsibility of the caring for the husband alone, this could be shared amongst the community. Mum realised that she has the right to live a happy, healthy and safe life without fear. An appreciation letter stated "your staff were like a light in the darkness and gave us the hope and the courage to have our family matter resolved".

(This case scenario is entirely fictitious— any relationship to real people is coincidental)

Your Story is Important to Us

By Jonty Bush, Victim Assist Queensland

Your story as a victim of crime is important. Victim Support Australia in partnership with the University of Melbourne are running a national survey for victims of crime aged 18 years or over. If you are a victim of crime or know someone that is a victim of a crime, please encourage them to complete the survey.

The results will help build a better picture of victim experiences and assist support agencies to improve their services.

The survey asks victims about:

- the kind of crime they experienced and how it affected them
- who they told about the crime (including the police, lawyers, court staff and victim support services)
- how they feel about their contact with these agencies; and
- what they wanted from these agencies.

The interview does not require any special computer skills, and will take about 20 to 30 minutes to complete.

If you are a victim of personal violent crime and are seeking assistance in completing this survey – or would like information on the Queensland Government's response to supporting victims of violent crime - please contact our LinkUp Officers on 1300 546 587.

To complete the survey, please visit the Victim Support Australia website at

www.victimsupport.org.au

UnitingCare Community Elder Abuse National Conference 2012

New Directions in Elder Abuse Prevention

Thursday and Friday June 7-8, 2012
Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre

Keynote Speakers



Prof Bridget Penhale

Bridget has published extensively on elder abuse and provided project management to the recent UK prevalence study on Elder Abuse in community settings. Bridget is currently involved in a number of research projects on elder abuse and adult protection including three European initiatives. The main EU-project concerns intimate Partner Violence and Older Women across 6 European countries.



Prof Toshio Tatara

Toshio is a researcher and educator with nearly 40 years experience in the human services field and has undertaken more than 50 research, evaluation, and training projects of national significance in the United States and Japan. Dr. Tatara is the author of over 90 articles, book chapters, and books published in the United States and Japan and provides expertise on elder abuse in minority populations.

Both presenters have been awarded the International Rosalie S. Wolf Memorial Award in Elder Abuse.



Sessions and speakers

Innovative research in elder abuse and prevention

- An indication of the prevalence of elder abuse and neglect in Queensland and Victorian communities - **Dr Sharon Atkin**
- Protecting Elder's Assets Study - **Dr Georgia Lowndes**
- High and dry or down and out in the rain: The personal cost of elder abuse - **Sue Field**

The tipping point: When does protection become abuse?

Panel debate with Bridget Penhale, Toshio Tatara Brian Herd and Sue Field

Insight on equity and diversity

- Preventing abuse of Aboriginal Elders: A South Australian Community Development project - **Louise Herft, Janine Haynes**
- Cultural influences on attitudes towards reporting financial elder abuse - **Dr Georgia Lowndes**
- Back to the closet – Abuse and neglect of LGBTI older Australians - **Sujay Kentlyn**

New policy and legislative considerations

Includes National and Queensland policy responses to domestic and family violence and changes to this legislation.

- **Queensland Police Service** – Domestic violence policy unit
- **Heather Nancarrow** – Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research
- **Vivienne Campion** - Seniors Legal and Support Service

Contact details

Domnica Sparkes or Rita Price-Jones
W: www.eapu.com.au
E: eapu@uocommunity.org.au
P: 1300 651 192



UnitingCare Queensland Launch their Reconciliation Action Plan

The 9th February 2012 marked the launch of UnitingCare Queensland's **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)** that provides a framework for building closer relationships and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Queensland. **UnitingCare Queensland (UCQ)** operations including Lifeline Community Care; UnitingCare Community; BlueCare; UnitingCare Social Justice and UnitingCare Health will adopt the new approach (*see below for description of a RAP*)

The RAP will strategically be embedded into policies and practice of UnitingCare Queensland services across all their operations that will strengthen and recognise the organisation for their contribution towards mending relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

UnitingCare Qld Social Justice drove the development of the RAP processes and many congratulations to all members of the team. It was a long and dedicated process to undertake. Many thanks also to UCQ marketing team for the production of the artwork, the DVD on the process of developing the RAP and the RAP Business Plan. All products are beautifully presented. Last, but not least, thanks to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff of UCQ, some of whom were part of the Working group for RAP development of which I was also happy to be part of the advisory process. The Working Group advised on language use and protocols such as cultural awareness and sensitivity. The group articulated their cultural knowledge and best ways of working towards improving Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations across the organisation.

The RAP is intended to create a cultural synergy (*a combined effort - working together in small parts for the bigger picture*) within the whole of the organisation resulting in far greater outcomes for all. The special event was held at State Library Qld's Indigenous Knowledge Centre, **Kuril Dhagun** (*see Trivia bit for meaning*). Approximately 100 + attended the launch with representation from all operations of UCQ. UCQ Chief Executive Officer, Anne Cross attended a private gathering (just prior to the launch) to present gifts of appreciation to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff involved in the RAP Working group. The gifts including a small replica of the painting of the Reconciliation journey '**We Walk Together**'.

Indigenous Artist Robert Barton was commissioned by UCQ to create an art piece for the occasion that depicts UnitingCare Queensland's commitment to reconciliation in building respectful relationships with Australia's first people. (*See below painting and meaning*). Aply, the artwork commissioned for the RAP is titled 'We Walk Together' to symbolize the respectful journey of *walking together in new directions* for UCQ.

Brisbane Aboriginal traditional songwoman, Maroochy Barambah, provided the Welcome to Country. The Songwoman spoke of her mother (aged 92 years) as the eldest living of the Turrbal people of Brisbane. I would like to pay respect to Aunty as I speak – I have been fortunate to meet Aunty on occasions and remember Aunty to be a remarkable and genteel soul. Performances by TSI singing trio and; Aboriginal Welcome song and Didgeridoo solo by UCC Aboriginal UCQ staff Wayne Weribone (who can REALLY play the Didge- WOW) and David Conlon from BlueCare. The Reverend Shane Blackman from the Aboriginal Uniting Church who has also had a long association with UCQ was guest speaker at the gathering.

*By Dulcie Bronsch
Member of UCC Working group for the RAP; Time for Grandparents*

UnitingCare Queensland Launch their Reconciliation Action Plan

By Dulcie Bronsch
Member of UCC Working group for the RAP; Time for Grandparents

A bit of Trivia...

Kuril Dhagun Indigenous Knowledge Centre at State Library Qld draws its meaning from **kuril**, Which is the native marsupial that is found on The State Library Qld near Kurilpa Point on the Brisbane River, and **Dhagun** meaning earth/place/country (SLQ official website description)

What is a RAP (described by Reconciliation Australia)

A **Reconciliation Action Plan (or RAP)** is a business plan that uses a holistic approach to create meaningful relationships and sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

The RAP program was launched in 2006 by Professor Mick Dodson and former Prime Minister John Howard as a forward looking aspect of the 40th anniversary of the 1967 referendum.

A RAP publicly formalises an organisation's contribution to reconciliation by identifying clear actions with realistic and measurable targets and is developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and leaders.

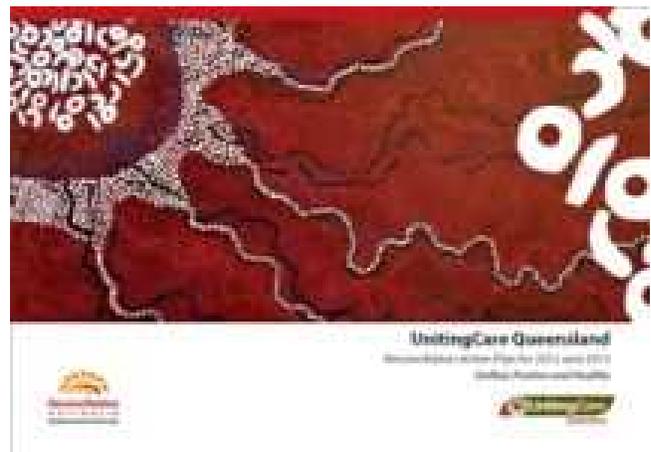
Reconciliation Action Plans are also about embedding cultural change within a whole organisation through building good relationships, respecting the special contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and creating opportunities.

We believe that strong relationships based on respect will lead to opportunities for the organisation, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Indigenous Artist Robert Barton describes his painting

We Walk Together

'*We Walk Together*' details the many different paths that have been taken on UnitingCare Qld's Reconciliation journey. The dotted features of blue, green and white lines contrasted against the deep red ochre background symbolises the complex weave of people, stories and histories coming together through the shared vision of reconciliation.



Next Peer Support Network Teleconference

Wednesday 21st March 2012

1pm – 2pm

How does the Office of the Adult Guardian work?

presented by
Mark Phillips
Office of the Adult Guardian

RSVP:

To: Rita Price-Jones by 5pm 16 March 2012

Email: eapu.psn@ucommunity.org.au or

Phone: 3867 2525

Upcoming Regional Elder Abuse Training

Expressions of interest open

- Longreach and surrounding area Mon 25th—29th June
- Mount Isa and surrounding areas Mon 3rd—14th September

If you would like to book a training or information session please contact Rose Marwick or Andrea de Vries on 1300 651 192 or eapu@ucommunity.org.au.



Presents

The Guardianship Framework Workshop

Topics include:

Wills and Enduring Powers of Attorney

Advance Health Directives and Statutory Health Attorney

Capacity and reduced capacity

Guardianship and Administration

*The Office of the Public Advocate, the Office of the Adult
Guardian and the Public Trustee*

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT)

Workshops are to be conducted state wide in 2012

Please register your interest by contacting Annelise van Deth at

(07) 3637 6000 Fax (07) 3637 6001 or email annelise@gada.org.au

...Supporting people to be heard...



Media Overview



| | | |
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| http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-01-31/act-aged-care-hotline/3802202?section=act | | |
| Abuse of elderly people becomes a target..... | Courier Mail | 30 Jan 12 |
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| http://www.thirdage.com/news/neurology-doctors-should-screen-patients-for-abuse_01-26-2012 | | |
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| http://www.daytondailynews.com/news/dayton-news/ohios-first-elder-abuse-shelter-opens-1308432.html | | |
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| | | |
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| http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK1111/S00193/financial-abuse-is-not-okay.htm | | |
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Calendar of Events

Action on Elder Abuse National Adult Safeguarding Conference

30 March 2012

Liverpool St, London, UK

W: <http://www.elderabuse.org.uk/Conferences/Conferences%20current.htm>

Law Week Victoria—Boomerang Kids

16 May 2012

Melbourne, Victoria

E: srv@cotavic.org.au

UnitingCare Community Elder Abuse National Conference 2012: New Directions in Elder Abuse Prevention

7–8 June 2012

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, Brisbane, Queensland

W: www.eapu.com.au

E: eapu@ucommunity.org.au

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Conference 2012: There's no excuse for abuse—Addressing the future

Adelaide Convention Centre, South Australia

14 June 2012

Adelaide, South Australia

W: www.sa.agedrights.asn.au/about_us/events

E: dianeb@agedrights.asn.au

2012 Queensland Violence Against Women Conference

7–9 August 2012

Brisbane, Queensland

W: www.dvrc.org.au

45th Australian Association of Gerontology Conference: Aging: Challenging the Boundaries

20–23 November 2012

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, Brisbane, Queensland

W: <http://www.aagconference.com/>

Important Date

15 June —World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

7 October— United Nations International Day of Older Persons

Editor's 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.



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For more information please contact:

Elder Abuse Prevention Unit

PO Box 2376

CHERMSIDE CENTRAL QLD 4032

Phone: (07) 3867 2525

HELPLINE: 1300 651 192

Email: eapu@ucommunity.org.au