



Queensland Focus

Edition 35—April to June 2014

Editorial	2
WEAAD—Queensland	3
Preventing elder abuse of people with Dementia	4
Carer wellbeing research	4
Report into sexual assault and older women	5
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day - Victoria	6
Third National Elder Abuse Conference	6
The significance of IDAHOT for older LGBTIQ people	7
New housing approach needed to stem growing problem	8
Elder Abuse in the media	9
Events	10

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2014

Elder Abuse Prevention Unit

June 15 marked World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. As the name suggests, it is a day of action and this year the message was “Make the Call.” We joined forces with as many community groups, government departments, local businesses and individuals to get the message out that elder abuse and mistreatment is not accepted in Queensland. Anyone can find out more about what is available to help them or the older person they are concerned about by calling the UnitingCare Community Elder Abuse Prevention Unit Helpline on 1300 651 192.

For those who have followed our campaigns, you would have noticed that each year the message has been a call to action and you may be wondering why? There are several reasons:

1. It helps people do something and “gives them permission to call” while remaining anonymous throughout a confidential call.
2. We collect non-identifying data about calls, callers and the situation to help paint a realistic picture of what elder abuse looks like in Queensland.
3. We feed the information from the data collected back into the community so that people know about elder abuse, their rights and where to find out information.
4. The information is used within government policy and decision-making areas to formulate the future direction and type of services needed to best meet the needs of Queenslanders.

EAPU received 1 115 calls to the Elder Abuse Helpline regarding 1 413 cases of abuse for the period April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014. The higher number of cases than calls reflects that often in a single call there are several victims (eg older mother and father) or several abusers (eg an adult child and a nephew). Also, workers may call regarding several different client situations. There has been a 13% average yearly increase in the number of calls received by the EAPU Helpline.

This may indicate that one of two things may be happening: a) people are becoming more aware of elder abuse and more willing to seek information and assistance on the issue; or b) more older people are being abused. Either way, the data indicates an increase in calls to the helpline and is showing that the message of prevention and involvement is getting through to the wider community and specifically to older families in crisis. This can only be a good thing for a society which aims to promote dignity, respect and quality for older people.

Quick Tips:

Provide your Enduring Power of Attorney documents to all the relevant parties including your bank, doctor/s and support people, not just the attorney. This will help people know what your wishes are and who is making decisions when.

Service funded by:



Editorial

Domnica Sparkes

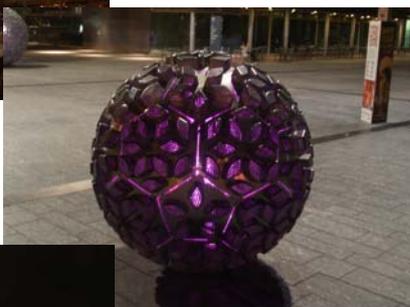
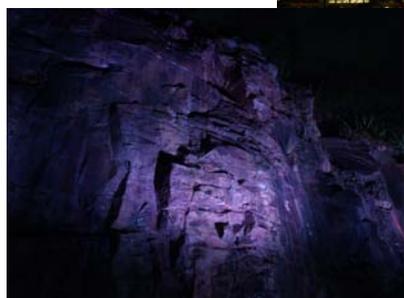
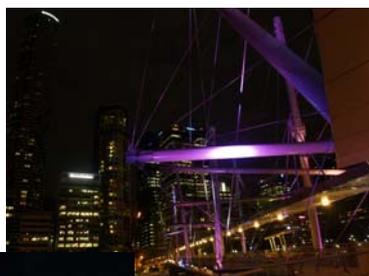
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day marked June as our busiest month of the year. This year was no different and the number of calls to the Helpline skyrocketed as part of a joint state-wide campaign. There were so many events to mark and commemorate the day that we felt very privileged to have such support and so many people who were passionate about preventing and raising awareness of elder abuse and mistreatment.

Those of you who kept an eye on our purple website would have seen some wonderful new initiatives and partnerships that deserve an honourable mention here— Tanya Bartolini and Jerry Coleby-Williams have been amazing ambassadors for the cause and have really helped get the word out. Another, that I cannot overlook is Heather Grant-Campbell for her brilliant coverage and exposure she has once again provided. Our work would be so much harder if it wasn't for the help so generously provided.

We cannot forget to mention the Brisbane City Council, Department of Housing and Public Works and Treasury Casino and Hotel for their support in lighting up the city in purple or the Queensland Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services have our ongoing thanks and appreciation for their help with developing resources and disseminating them as well as continued support with social marketing and getting information out to both the tech savvy and the non-tech savvy members of our community.

I am sure that I have missed people that deserve a mention and I do apologise (I will cite word limit as my reason). There are so many people and we are truly grateful for your help and support, both short-term and ongoing. You are all wonderful, caring people who make Queensland a better place to live in.

The photos we have serve as proof that there are so many dedicated people who put in hours and hours of their time to make these events such a success and help us raise awareness of such a vital issue— elder abuse. Thank you.



Queensland TAFE—Brisbane North Campus students launch
WEAAD Awareness Project

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day: Queensland

Elder Abuse Prevention Unit partnered with a number of agencies, government departments and community groups to make World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2014 a huge success. Initiatives this year built on last years events and undertook new challenges. For instance, IRT The Ridge residents who formed a singing group and performed in Queen St Mall sparked interest and support from journalist Heather Grant-Campbell.

This year we were fortunate to get support from celebrities. Celebrity chef Tanya Bartolini added her support by providing a purple recipe for a cake that has been passed down to her from her grandmother. Gardening Australia presenter Jerry Coleby-Williams also supported WEAAD 2014 by suggesting people plant “Johnny Jump-ups”, also known as “Heartsease”.

Here is a short list of some events that took place around Queensland for WEAAD:

- Ipswich City Council Seniors and Disability Community Development Officer —The Great Debate “Should seniors spend their kids’ inheritance?”
- Victims Assist—Identification of Elder Abuse within an Aged Care Context
- Balmoral Rotary and Neighbourhood Watch —Safety and Rights for Seniors
- Caxton Legal Centre—Purple Morning Tea
- Townsville Community Legal Service—Respect for Seniors Street March
- CTM Links Capella Tieri Middlemount Community Support Network Inc—Coffee & Chat Purple Morning Tea
- Gold Coast Medicare Local—Community Forum
- UnitingCare Community—Purple Morning Tea
- Blackall Churches of Christ Care—Go Purple for a Day Seminar
- Queensland TAFE Brisbane North Campus—Elder Abuse Awareness Project Launch
- Wynnum Dog Park—Purple Dog Day
- IRT The Ridge—Flash mob at Queen St Mall, Brisbane City

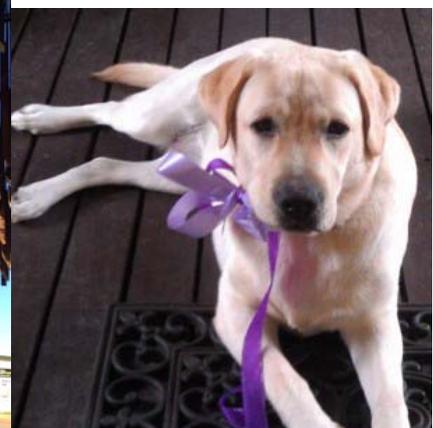
Those were just the ones that told us they were holding an event and we are certain that there were many others who commemorated WEAAD in their own teams or community. Please send in your photos and share your story with us. For more information please contact the EAPU on 1300 651 192 or email: eapu@uccommunity.org.au.



June 2014 front page of The Senior Queensland Newspaper



Barcaldine Tree of Knowledge—
WEAAD training sessions for regional
Central Queensland



Millie the Dog—showed her support
and wore purple for WEAAD

Preventing Financial Abuse of People with Dementia - Alzheimer's Australia NSW Discussion Paper

On June 18 Alzheimer's Australia NSW (AlzNSW) launched a discussion paper at NSW Parliament House. The paper, Preventing Financial Abuse of People with Dementia, examines how financial abuse of people with dementia occurs and what can be done to prevent or reduce the incidence of abuse.

It is difficult to calculate the prevalence of financial abuse of people with dementia as it occurs in a multitude of ways and much of it remains unreported to authorities. People with dementia may have diminished capacity to recall the financial abuse or lack insight to understand the abuse. The percentage of cases that go unreported is also likely to be high due to feelings of stigma, shame and embarrassment experienced by people who are victims of financial abuse and their families.

AlzNSW found that people with dementia, family members and service providers are reluctant to report financial abuse. Victims are often in a relationship of dependence with the perpetrator and may fear repercussions if they report the abuse. There is also confusion about who to report abuse to. When financial abuse is reported there are challenges in investigating cases as it can be difficult to substantiate and prove, especially when the victim has dementia.

Much financial abuse is perpetrated within families and by people known to the victim. The research also suggests that a considerable proportion of financial abuse is perpetrated by people appointed a power of attorney who fail to act in the best interests of the person with dementia.

However, not all financial abuse of people with dementia is perpetrated by family members and those holding powers of attorney. People with dementia, particularly those who live alone, are susceptible to exploitation and abuse by neighbours and friends who prey on their vulnerability.

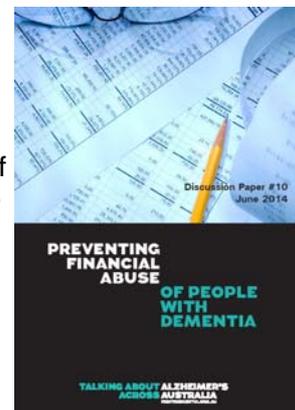
A number of strategies to reduce and resolve incidences of financial abuse of people with dementia are examined in the paper. The research findings and recommendations have implications for many stakeholders including governments, lawyers, police, banks and community services.

The discussion paper is available on the AlzNSW website at <http://www.fightdementia.org.au/new-south-wales/research-nsw.aspx>.

For hard copies of the paper or more information about the project, contact Kylie Miskovski at AlzNSW – kylie.miskovski@alzheimers.org.au or (02) 8875 4641.

Alzheimer's Australia NSW is the charity for people with dementia and their families and carers. As the peak body, it provides advocacy, support services, education and information. More than 332,000 people have dementia in Australia. This number is projected to reach more than half a million by 2030.

National Dementia Helpline: 1800 100 500
www.fightdementia.org.au



Carer Wellbeing Research

Tegan Dowling—Central Queensland University

Carers make an invaluable contribution to the lives of family and friends who they support. For some the experience is a highly positive and rewarding one, however the caring role can also be very challenging.

CQ University student researcher Tegan Dowling is carrying out research in order to explore the influence cognitive processes such as locus of control, self-esteem, mindfulness and optimism have on carers' subjective wellbeing. It is hoped that findings from this study will lead to the increased specificity of wellbeing assessment and interventions available to carers.

Tegan is asking carers to provide input by answering a 20 minute online survey. Interested participants can also elect to receive feed-

back on the outcome of the research.

We acknowledge that a carer's time is valuable and want to thank you for your contribution. **By completing this questionnaire you can choose to enter into a draw to win one of two \$50 Myer digital gift cards.**

Just click the link below or copy the address into your web browser to get started. www.surveymonkey.com/s/carers_wellbeing

If you have any questions please contact Tegan on 0412 445 109 or at the following email address: tegan.dowling@cqumail.com



Report on sexual assault and older women

Catherine Barrett—La Trobe University

La Trobe researchers have published a ground breaking study on sexual assault against older women.

The three year study is the first and most comprehensive of its kind.



Researchers spoke to family members, aged care service providers, police and sexual assault agencies.

The report found:

- That sexual assault can occur in a range of environments; home, health and aged care settings.
- There is no one type of perpetrator – family, workers, visitors to aged care settings can all commit this crime.
- Women who have been sexually assaulted are silenced by shame, fear and a general lack of awareness and responsiveness from all quarters.
- There is a need for education, public policy and other reforms to prevent sexual assaults.

Chief Investigator [Dr Catherine Barrett](#) from the University's [Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society](#) says it's an invisible crime that needs much greater public awareness and policy prevention.

'Many people think older women just aren't going to be targets of any kind of sexual assault. This is wrong. This report clearly shows older women are sexually assaulted and that the silence surrounding this crime makes older women vulnerable. We want this research to be used to create prevention strategies and accountability measures to prevent sexual assault,' Dr Barrett said.

The study is called Norma's Project. Norma was 84 years old when she was sexually assaulted by a worker in an aged care facility.

The report findings and recommendations will be presented to government and the sector for direct action.

You can read the full [Norma's Project Report here](#).

And read further coverage of the findings in [The Age](#).

Image credit: Ricky Norris <https://www.flickr.com/photos/rickynorris/2181786826/>

Media Contact:

Catherine Garrett 03 9479 6565

0418 964 325

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day—Victorian Style

Seniors Rights Victoria (Victoria)

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Forum for Professionals and Workers

A Forum was held on Monday June 16 at Victoria University Convention Centre, Melbourne. This year's themes were Human Rights and Ageing, Financial Abuse and Responding to Violence, Abuse, Exploitation and Neglect. Key speakers were Associate Professor Cheryl Tilse, Lead Investigator in the Assets, Ageing and Intergenerational Transfers Research Program at University of Queensland, Mr. John Chesterman, Churchill Fellow, Manager of Policy and Education at Victorian Office of the Public Advocate and Ms. Janet Wood, Chairperson, Human Rights



Sub-Committee, Policy Council, COTA Victoria. The new CALD Elder Abuse DVD in different languages was previewed at the Forum by Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria.

Bendigo

A World Elder Abuse Awareness Day photographic exhibition by students of Bendigo Senior Secondary College was opened by the Director of the Bendigo Art Gallery on Monday June 16. The exhibition is a project by students on older members of their respective families. The exhibition ran from June 16 until June 20 at MacGillivray Hall, Bendigo TAFE, McCrae Street, Bendigo.

Melbourne

Melbourne hosted a Legal Matters for Older Fellows Forum at Melton Community Hall. A morning of entertaining stories, information and light refreshments for men over 55 years of age. Speakers and community lawyers from Seniors Rights Victoria presented on Enduring Powers of Attorney, Family Agreements and Money, Ageing and Family. Lawyers were available to answer questions. Special guest speaker: Wayne Henwood, Ex-Sydney Swans AFL Player, Barrister and Member of AFL Tribunal and Anti-Doping Tribunal.



Frankston

Some events that happened in Frankston:

- Trees in Shannon Mall will be yarn bombed for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.
- Seniors Rights Concert, Sound of Music Tribute at Seaford Community Centre. Will include presentations by the Mayor and Seniors Rights Victoria.
- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Lunchtime Seminar for Workers hosted by Peninsula Community Legal Centre and presented by Seniors Rights Victoria.



Third National Elder Abuse Conference—Unlocking Solutions

Advocare Incorporated, the peak Western Australian organisation in the promotion of older people's rights and prevention of elder abuse, is proud to be hosting the Third National Elder Abuse Conference at the Hyatt Regency Perth, from the 3rd to 5th September 2014.

Unless we take real action now, elder abuse will continue to become one of the biggest social issues in Australia.

The Third National Elder Abuse Conference will offer delegates from health, aged care, medical, legal and finance sectors the most comprehensive information, research and best practice to address

elder abuse.

This will be the first conference of its kind in Perth, and the biggest in Australia and will help you unlock the solutions to prevent elder abuse and protect vulnerable older people.

The two day conference will be followed by a 1 day World Café where delegates can apply the skills and learnings from the conference, transform it into real action and become the architects of possibility.

To view the program and register, visit www.elderabuse2014.com to be a part of this landmark event.



The Significance of the IDAHOT for Older LGBTQ People

Sujay Kentlyn, Project Officer, LGBTI Elders' Wellbeing Project: Building Health and Wellbeing amongst LGBTI Elders in NSW

Originally called the International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO) when it was first celebrated in 2005, this annual celebration on May 17 commemorates the decision to remove homosexuality from the World Health Organisation (WHO) International Classification of Diseases (ICD) in 1990.

Older same-sex attracted Australians grew up and have lived most of their lives in times when their sexuality was not only a criminal offense, but also regarded as a mental illness. Some were committed against their will by family members or the police to mental institutions where they endured psychiatric treatments such as electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and medications.

With transphobia added in 2009, and the recognition that biphobia should also be included, the IDAHOT event is designed to raise awareness of the prejudice, discrimination, and violence experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) [1] people around the world, both currently and in the past.

Many Australians have a limited understanding of the lived experience of LGBTQ older people: rejection by families, friends, and communities of faith; police harassment, entrapment and imprisonment; abuse by health professionals; loss of jobs and housing; constant vilification in the media; and the extent of the verbal, physical and sexual harassment, abuse and violence, including many murders, in homes, workplaces, and in public.

The celebration of IDAHOT acknowledges the struggles that older LGBTQ people have faced, and honours their courage and commitment to change their societies and win the freedoms and rights that are enjoyed today. It also serves as a reminder that all of these abuses continue in various forms, and that ensuing generations need to continue the work of our LGBTQ Elders in building a world free of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

Notes

[1] This article does not refer to Intersex people as the writer is not qualified to comment on the significance of IDAHOT to them.

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For more information:

Phone: 0488 035 500

Email: sujay@outrageousageing.org.au

<http://www.outrageousageing.org.au>



LINKING SENIORS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO INFORMATION

Seniors Enquiry Line is a Queensland-wide telephone information and referral service which links seniors, their families, friends and carers with information on a wide variety of services throughout Queensland.



The services covered include those relating to retirement, concessions, leisure, accommodation, health, finance, the law, computers, home help, transport and many other areas relevant to Queensland Seniors.

Call Seniors Enquiry Line on **1300 135 500** for the cost of a local call, weekdays from 9.00am to 5.00pm or you can visit the website www.seniorsenquiryline.com.au

The service is operated by UnitingCare Community and funded by the Queensland Government's Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.

New Housing Approach Needed to Stem Growing Problem: Elder Abuse

Advocare (Western Australia)

It's hard to believe that in a country where human rights are a part of our everyday lives, there are thousands of senior Australians who do not speak up about them.

These are the rights to be treated with respect, have choices, be and feel safe and to live without exploitation, abuse or neglect.

Elder abuse, most commonly perpetrated by family members and friends, happens to the most vulnerable in our society. Dependence, social isolation and ageism coupled with shame and self-blame significantly contributes to victims of abuse.

Research has revealed that as many as 1 in 20 older people will experience abuse, making it more prevalent than Alzheimer's disease, and one of the most predominant social issues facing older Australians.

Greg Mahney, CEO of Advocare said elder abuse comprises of a complex suite of issues and one of those significantly contributing to more incidents being reported is housing issues.

"We have had longstanding concerns about the lack of affordable housing, the increasing number of older people at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, and the impact on older Australians" said Mr Mahney.

"There is a shortage not only of rental properties,

but also in residential aged care facilities with the wait lists increasing rapidly" he added.

Many older people will rely on their family and friends to house them while they await care which subjects them to a higher risk of elder abuse.

A submission by Advocare to the Senate Enquiry into affordable housing is currently being reviewed.

It calls for action to be taken into:

- Increasing the number of single units available for Department of Housing tenants;
 - Older people being seen as a higher priority on the Department of Housing waiting list;
 - Policy in Department of Housing allowing older people to have family stay for the purposes of care/support;
- Option for Police, welfare agencies and victim support services to appeal a strike on behalf of a person who is a victim of family abuse, or who did not contribute to the disruptive behaviour.

It is hoped that issues raised in the submission will bring greater awareness about elder abuse and support those experiencing it.

The 2014 National Elder Abuse Conference held in Perth will also allow organisations and people working with seniors to look at all aspects of elder abuse. Visit www.elderabuse2014.com to view the program and register.



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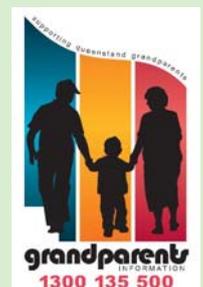
Third National Elder Abuse Conference
3 & 4 September 2014
Hyatt Regency Perth

Time for Grandparents Program

The Time for Grandparents program was set up by the Department of Communities to provide help to eligible grandparents who are the primary carers of their grandchildren by offering fun and interesting activities for grandchildren and giving grandparents the opportunity for well earned time-out.

The program can fund the following options in many areas: school camps, Scripture Union camps, PCYC, Scouts, Guides, Girls and Boys Brigade, Fitness & Dance, Sport & Recreation, Little Athletics, gymnastics, swimming, softball, netball, rowing, cricket, touch football, soccer, rugby league and more.

To check eligibility and for information please phone Seniors Enquiry Line on 1300 135 500.



Elder abuse in the media



Australian Media

Tougher laws urged on financial abuse of older Australians — ABC News 17 Jun 14
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-06-16/tougher-laws-urged-on-financial-abuse-of-older-australians/5525780>

Calls for action as elder abuse grows — ABC News 14 Jun 14
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-06-13/calls-for-action-as-elder-abuse-grows/5523580>

If you're not careful you'll become one of these statistics — Starts at 60 10 Jun 14
<http://www.startsatsixty.com.au/living/if-youre-not-careful-youll-become-one-of-these-shocking-statistics#comment-425877>

Wear purple to show you care — The Senior 1 Jun 14
<http://www.thesenior.com.au/News/Digital-Paper/Queensland>

Carer killed elderly man and spent money from house sale on pokies — Brisbane Times 20 May 14
<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/nsw/carers-killed-elderly-man-and-spent-money-from-house-sale-on-pokies-20140520-zrica.html>

Elderly woman sexually assaulted in Mackay — Brisbane Times 13 May 14
<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/elderly-woman-sexually-assaulted-in-mackay-20140513-zraqw.html>

Woman admits stealing \$110K from 95yo — The Australian 5 May 14
<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/latest-news/woman-admits-stealing-110k-from-95yo/story-fn3dxiwe-1226906080412>

Yorkeys Knob pair to face charges in Tasmania over death of elderly woman — Cairns Post 30 Apr 14
<http://www.cairnspost.com.au/news/cairns/yorkeys-knob-pair-to-face-charges-in-tasmania-over-death-of-elderly-woman/story-fnjpusyw-1226900402397>

85yo man to be charged after a shooting at strata meeting in Sydney's south-west — ABC News 25 Apr 14
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-04-25/85yo-to-be-charged-over-strata-meeting-shooting/5411070>

Grandparents as parents — ABC Radio National Life Matters 8 Apr 14
<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/lifematters/grandparents-as-parents/5374124>

Stop being patronising and treat seniors with respect — Brisbane Times 7 Apr 14
<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/blogs/jessica-rudd/stop-being-patronising-and-treat-seniors-with-respect-20140407-367ch.html>

Elders encounter new form of abuse: legal expert — Daily Telegraph 21 Mar 14
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/west/elders-encounter-new-form-of-abuse-legal-expert/story-fngr8i5s-1226860333038?nk=f7aa972fe453f183863d5aaff15061eb>

Sydney man charged with murder of his 72yo mother at Villawood in city's west — ABC News 7 Mar 14
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-07/sydney-man-charged-with-murder-of-his-72yo-mother/5305240>

Mother and son in legal tug of war over will — ABC News 5 Mar 14
<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/lawreport/5300582>

International Media

Harper Government introduces the Digital Privacy Act — Newswire.ca 9 Apr 14
<http://news.gc.ca/web/article/en.do;jsessionid=413aa4f62492c565de0689f06c0b0b95d580dbf308b48c2459a126c3cc15f4c1.e34Rc3iMbx8Oai0Tbx0SaqxNbh10?mthd=index&ctr.page=1&nid=836829>

Mickey Rooney/s Elder Dispute May Help Protect Millions — Insurancenewsnet.com 8 Apr 14
<http://insurancenewsnet.com/oarticle/2014/04/08/mickey-rooneys-elder-dispute-may-help-protect-millions-a-486502.html>

More funding for elder abuse services — 3News.co.nz 8 Apr 14
<http://www.3news.co.nz/More-funding-for-elder-abuse-services/tabid/1607/articleID/339280/Default.aspx>

Elder abuse death allegation lands daughter in jail — Komonews.com 26 Mar 14
<http://www.komonews.com/news/local/Elder-abuse-death-allegation-lands-daughter-in-jail-252557041.html>

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Third National Elder
Abuse Conference
3 & 4 September 2014
Hyatt Regency Perth

Events

- AAG—Health Reform and Older People Webinar
23 July 2014 from 12—1pm AEST
Website: <http://www.aag.asn.au/events/event/health-reform-and-older-people>
- AAG—Research Workshop—Research with Older People - Problems and Pitfalls
25 July 2014 from 10am—11am
Hobart, Tasmania
Website: <http://www.aag.asn.au/events/event/research-workshop-research-with-older-people-problems-and-pitfalls>
- EAPU—Central Queensland Elder Abuse Training
11—14 August 2014
Email: Natasha.love@uccommunity.org.au
PH: 1300 651 192
- Adult Protection and Advocacy conference
20-22 August 2014
Illinois, USA
Website: <http://www.illinois.gov/aging/Resources/NewsAndPublications/PressReleases/Pages/2014-0820.aspx>
- 3rd National Elder Abuse Conference
3-4 September 2014
Perth Western Australia.
Email: info@eecw.com.au
- ACSA 2014 National Conference—Coming of Age—Redefining Aging
7-10 September 2014
Adelaide, South Australia
Website: <http://www.acsaconference.org.au/>
- 5th Annual Summit on Elder Financial Exploitation
31 October 2014
Portland, Oregon, USA
Website: <http://www.napsa-now.org/about-napsa/annual-conference/>
- AAG 47th National Conference—50 Not Out
26—28 November 2014
Adelaide, South Australia
Website: <http://www.aag.asn.au/national-conference/2014-conference>

Disclaimer:

Editor's Note: Opinions expressed in this edition "Queensland Focus", do not necessarily reflect those of the UnitingCare Community—Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU). Articles in this newsletter may be used with the permission of the contributing author. This publication is a guide only and should not substitute independent legal advice.

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