

“Promoting the rights of older people to live free from abuse.”



eapu

Elder Abuse Prevention Unit

ANNUAL REPORT  
2005 — 2006



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Brisbane

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## **A Message from the Manager**

Readers of this and previous annual reports will find that the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU) produces an enormous number of outcomes each year and at a consistently high standard. Workload increases each year within the areas of our funding agreement and this is responded to, but it requires a substantial amount of “out of the box” thinking to maintain all the areas of EAPU’s activities across Queensland. This has led to further changes to the operational structure of the EAPU with the withdrawal of the regional worker in North Queensland due to costs. This region will now be serviced by Brisbane based workers.

It is worth remembering that when I first started as the manager of the EAPU in November 1999, the EAPU had three regionally based part-time project workers; one each in Cairns, Warwick and Rockhampton while Brisbane had two EAPU project officers and a part-time administrative support worker. The EAPU regional presence now consists of one part-time position in Rockhampton (currently vacant), while three project officers and one administrative support positions are located in Brisbane. Understandably I am concerned that the Brisbane based workers now have additional responsibility for the entire EAPU workload for Queensland and will remain in this position until the Central Queensland position is filled. Recruitment for this position is expected to be difficult due to remuneration limits, the enormous geographical area, the task of operating two programs (half EAPU and half Safe & Confident Living), and the lack of face to face support from the rest of the EAPU team.

The workers in all EAPU positions undertake duties that are wider ranging, far more complex and of a higher profile than what were expected of them in 1999 and they do this well, rising to the challenge. This year there was a major media focus on elder abuse, partly due to an EAPU financial abuse awareness campaign that culminated in the report “Financial Abuse of Older People: A Queensland Perspective” produced for the EAPU by Leonie Sanders B Psych (Hons), Dip. Mgmt in September 2005. This in turn generated a great deal of media interest including a feature story by Radio National in their Background Briefing series and interest from Channel Nine’s Sunday Program. I would like to point out that the media are also referred to appropriate EAPU reference group members or other key individuals wherever possible, making the EAPU a valuable support for these agencies. Other media events were not planned, such as the reporting on the rape of a resident in a Victorian aged care facility. The tone of the reporting was putting great pressure on the federal government to establish a mandatory reporting response to elder abuse. The EAPU had to quickly document its stance in this area and to lobby the Minister of Health and Ageing and his Aged Care Advisory Committee to ensure that a knee jerk commitment to mandatory reporting was not implemented without all the issues being considered. A comprehensive report that clearly articulated the arguments around mandatory reporting was able to be drafted and distributed to the Minister and his advisory committee prior to their meeting to discuss this issue. This document “EAPU: Position Statement on Mandatory Reporting of Elder Abuse” is commended to readers wishing to better understand the complex issues surrounding this type of legislative response. Meanwhile the EAPU was also undertaking many other important projects and reports in response to elder abuse concerns in Queensland.

Consultations for developing Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander resources were completed this reporting year along with an interim update report and the drafting of a final report which will take this project to the next stage of developing the resources. This project was supported by Indigenous facilitator Grant Sarra who worked with all the consultations.

The EAPU also continued to support the four community responses that were originally initiated by this unit and it is pleasing to see that both the West Moreton and Gold Coast Elder Abuse Prevention Taskforces received some funding to continue their initiatives. The Gold Coast taskforce also launched it's very popular Clinical Pathways poster for responding to elder abuse while the Prevention of Elder Abuse in C.A.L.D. Communities Taskforce held another very popular multicultural training forum which appears to be developing into an annual event. The Hervey Bay taskforce continues to operate under the ongoing and welcomed support from the Hervey Bay City Council and without this I am sure it would have folded due to the distance needed to support this initiative from the EAPU workers in Brisbane. It should be noted that the West Moreton Taskforce also receives generous support from the Ipswich City Council.

I started this message with the news of having to withdraw the EAPU position from North Queensland and of having to service this region from Brisbane. While this is the case, I am certain that EAPU's services will continue at the same level of excellence in 2006/07. Sadly, elder abuse is not on the decline. As an increasing issue, there will continue to be more demands on our service. This is demonstrated by the upward increase in helpline calls each year. We believe this increase to be the tip of the iceberg as has been described in many other countries. The demand for our service will continue to increase and costs will continue to rise. The EAPU has documented these issues in the report "Responding to Elder Abuse in Queensland: Current Capacity and Future Issues for the EAPU" which is available to those who are interested. This coming year the EAPU will continue to seek funding opportunities through the Dept of Communities but will also attempt to broaden its funding base. Hopefully in the 2006/07 annual report I will be able to announce the re-establishment of regional positions, or at the least that no further cuts have had to be made.

Thanks must go to the EAPU staff for doing an incredible job and maintaining a professional attitude in times of extreme business. They are a great team to work with and committed and passionate in their approach to the rights of older people.

I would like to thank Lifeline Brisbane for their continued support of the program. This support has been demonstrated in many ways throughout the year. Lifeline Brisbane always go that 'extra mile' and also provide the opportunity for staff to have involvement in many of the celebrations that are part of the organisational context. I would also like to thank the staff from the Office for Seniors for their continued presence at our meetings and forums and their supportive responses to our ideas.

*C. Procopis*

Chris Procopis  
Manager – Older Persons Programs  
Lifeline Brisbane



## Part 1. Program Updates

### ***Changes to EAPU Operations***

This unit has always operated under best practice principles to ensure it achieves maximum effectiveness. Using feedback loops with clients, reference groups and networks result in ongoing reviews and changes to staffing structures, program content, service delivery and the development and use of resources. This model recognises the need to undertake ongoing adjustments to the program to make best use of limited resources.

The North Qld region has not always achieved the desired outcomes due to auspicing costs, the difficulty part-time workers have to undertake regional travel, worker turnover and the part-time (recently casual) nature of this position. To better utilise available resources the EAPU has undertaken to service this region from the Brisbane office using the savings to undertake the travel required. The desired outcomes include greater coverage of this region and a more consistent and stable provision of service. This new arrangement came into operation in June 2006 and several regional trips have already been scheduled for the rest of this year.

### ***Staff Turnover***

**Central Queensland:** The Resignation of Verna Halsey in June to take up a position as a social worker with Qld Mental Health has left a considerable gap to fill in the EAPU ranks. Verna's energy and people skills established extensive networks within the Central Queensland region. Verna was also the coordinator of the Safe and Confident living program which set up many successful events and groups including

the well patronised Senior's Breakfast which is now a regular event each year. Her skills in this area is demonstrated when she secured the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC as this year's speaker at the Senior's Breakfast. This position is funded half under the EAPU program and half from the Safe and Confident living program. It is the intention to have this position filled as soon as possible and was therefore advertised immediately.



Les, Verna, Trish, Maya & de Arn (missing are Nick and Chris)

**Northern Queensland:** The North Queensland position has been spoken of previously and it was a disappointment for all concerned to not be able to continue de Arn Dixon's casual employment. As a worker on 10 hours per week it was recognised that unrealistic expectations were being placed on de Arn. Achieving educational and networking outcomes was further complicated by the considerable hurdles with regard to organisational requirements, safety, and personal disruption that working from home entails. The skill set that de Arn had with regard to working with the Aboriginal community will be particularly missed. The EAPU wishes de Arn well with her other position as a Gambling Help Education Officer.

**South West/Brisbane:** Les Jackson, Senior Project Officer in Brisbane has also flagged his intention to resign at the end of 2006 to move to Canberra with his partner. Les has been with the EAPU since 1998 when he started as a volunteer and

moved on to paid employment in 2000. It is the intention of the EAPU to advertise and fill this position prior to Les leaving so that a suitable handover can take place.

Nick Harris who was a major contributor to the Indigenous project resigned for a position in Queensland Health in February this year. Nick undertook a lot of the research and database workload for the unit and his quiet determination and contribution to the EAPU will also be missed. Nick's position was filled by Domnica Alexa who previously worked for the Dept of Child Safety as a Child Safety Officer. Dom brings her own skill mix to the EAPU and has settled in well. Dom is undertaking a Grad Dip in Education and Teaching and will therefore undertake some of the EAPU educational activities in the future.

### ***Staff Development***

Ongoing development of staff is encouraged with all workers provided the opportunity to attend activities across a broad range of topics. Seminars, forums, conferences, breakfast colloquiums as well as various courses were attended. Each staff member attended at least one activity per month in 2005/06. Topic areas included domestic violence, elder abuse, impaired capacity, legal issues, social isolation, mental illness, substitute decision making, cross cultural, as well as various workers undertaking telephone and personal counselling courses, database courses and further education and teaching (grad dip).

Staff development also comes with the networking and information sharing opportunities that arise when attending these educational activities. This become a key factor in providing appropriate and current options to Helpline clients and facilitates the referral process.

### ***Funding Initiatives***

The EAPU has submitted several funding bids or requests to enhance the service over the reporting year.

A funding bid was submitted to develop an education video and other resources for Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander communities following on from consultations conducted in 2005. The EAPU is anticipating that funding to produce these resources will be announced in the 2006/07 financial year. Details of this project are contained elsewhere in this report.

The EAPU submitted a request for an enhancement to its program during this reporting period recognising that with the continual ageing of the Queensland population there will be greater instances of abuse to contend with. The main focus of the enhancement was to provide a greater ability to respond to demand in the regional parts of Qld so additional staff and resources were requested for Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Brisbane. A major feature of this statewide response was to enhance the capacity of the unit to assist local regional communities to develop their own resources and responses to elder abuse. The EAPU has experienced many successes with this type of community response in dealing with situations of abuse. Unfortunately the EAPU was not able to secure any additional enhancement funding but will continue to put forward requests to increase its funding in the 2006/07 financial year.

Funding was also submitted to produce a suite of posters under the Supporting Community Organisations Initiative. The awareness raising posters were to have a common theme of "Empowerment" & "Community" and use strong images of seniors and their community. The posters would attempt to capture broad representations of Queensland's diverse cultural groups including those living in city or rural/remote communities. The visual and word message was to show seniors and community rejecting abuse together. At the time of writing there has been no response to this submission.

## Part 2. Funded Projects

### Section 2.1 Helpline Report

#### *The Helpline Response*

The EAPU Helpline is a state-wide service provided for people who wish to discuss cases of elder abuse or gain more information about the topic. The Helpline is a confidential service where callers may remain anonymous. The role of the Helpline is to provide information and referral options to callers to meet their specific and individual needs. All calls made to the EAPU during business hours (9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday) are answered. Calls made when all operators are engaged or outside of business hours are answered by a voicemail system and callers are encouraged to leave a message for staff to return their call. All messages are responded to the same day or next working day if left out of hours. Calls where a return phone number has not been left cannot be traced (refer to Appendix A).

All operators are trained telephone counsellors and referrals are offered after thorough exploration in order to identify the presenting and underlying issues that affect the abused person. EAPU's approach is holistic, exploring the unmet needs and relationships of "significant others" while retaining a focus on the needs and safety of the abused person.

*Got more help than I did from counsellor at D.V. last year and also counsellor at (Agency Name). Don't want a divorce - want help to manage husband's injury (brain damage). Helpline Feedback, Refer to Helpline Evaluation section.*

The aim is to empower the older person to make their own decisions and follow up the referral options generated. However, if the older person is too disempowered or otherwise unable to follow through on referrals, with their permission, the EAPU may liaise or advocate for the abused person to access the required services.

#### **Helpline Call Rates**

This year the number of elder abuse reports to the EAPU Helpline has increased from 523 in 2004/05 to 595 in the 2005/2006 financial year, either directly requesting support and information in relation to abuse affecting themselves or another family member, friend or client. That is a 12% rise in the number of reports received. Figure 1 shows a trendline of the number of individual reports received since the Helpline first commenced operating at Lifeline Brisbane, in November 1999. Furthermore, peaks in the number of calls received during the lifetime of the Helpline have been especially prominent when there has been major media coverage of the services provided by the EAPU and elder abuse.

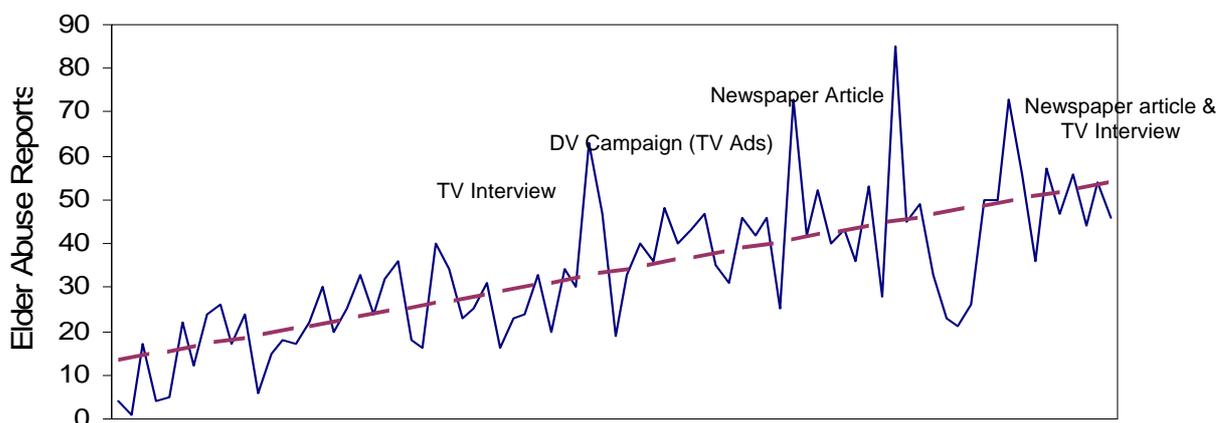


Figure 1. Longitudinal display of number of calls received each month on the Helpline.

There was also an increase in the overall number calls both incoming and outgoing (follow-up) calls on the Helpline, up from the 654 incoming and 165 outgoing calls recorded in 2004/05, refer to Table 1. The length of time taken per call, however, is similar to that of last year (20.36 minutes in 2004/05 compared to 22.03 minutes in 2005/06). It should be noted that the length of calls vary considerably depending on the type of caller e.g. The abused person is likely to be on the phone a lot longer than a service provider or family member or a friend.

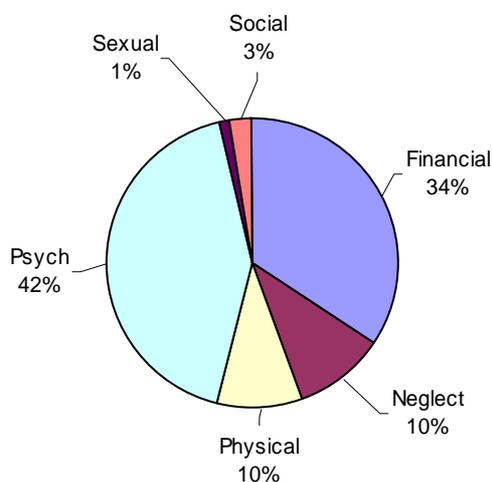
EAPU Helpline 1/7/2005 – 30/6/2006	Incoming calls	Outgoing calls	All calls
<b>Number of calls</b>	722	225	947
<b>Minutes</b>	18451	2409	20860
<b>Hours</b>	307.52	40.15	347.67
<b>Average Length (mins)</b>	25.56	10.71	22.03

*Table 1. Number and duration of calls received by the Helpline.*

### **Abuse Type**

Abuse Types are captured on two levels in the EAPU database; that is the primary abuse type and secondary abuse types. The Primary abuse type is the most critical presenting problem for which the caller is seeking assistance. The Secondary abuse types are the other forms of abuse the victim may be subjected to. There may be several secondary abuse types.

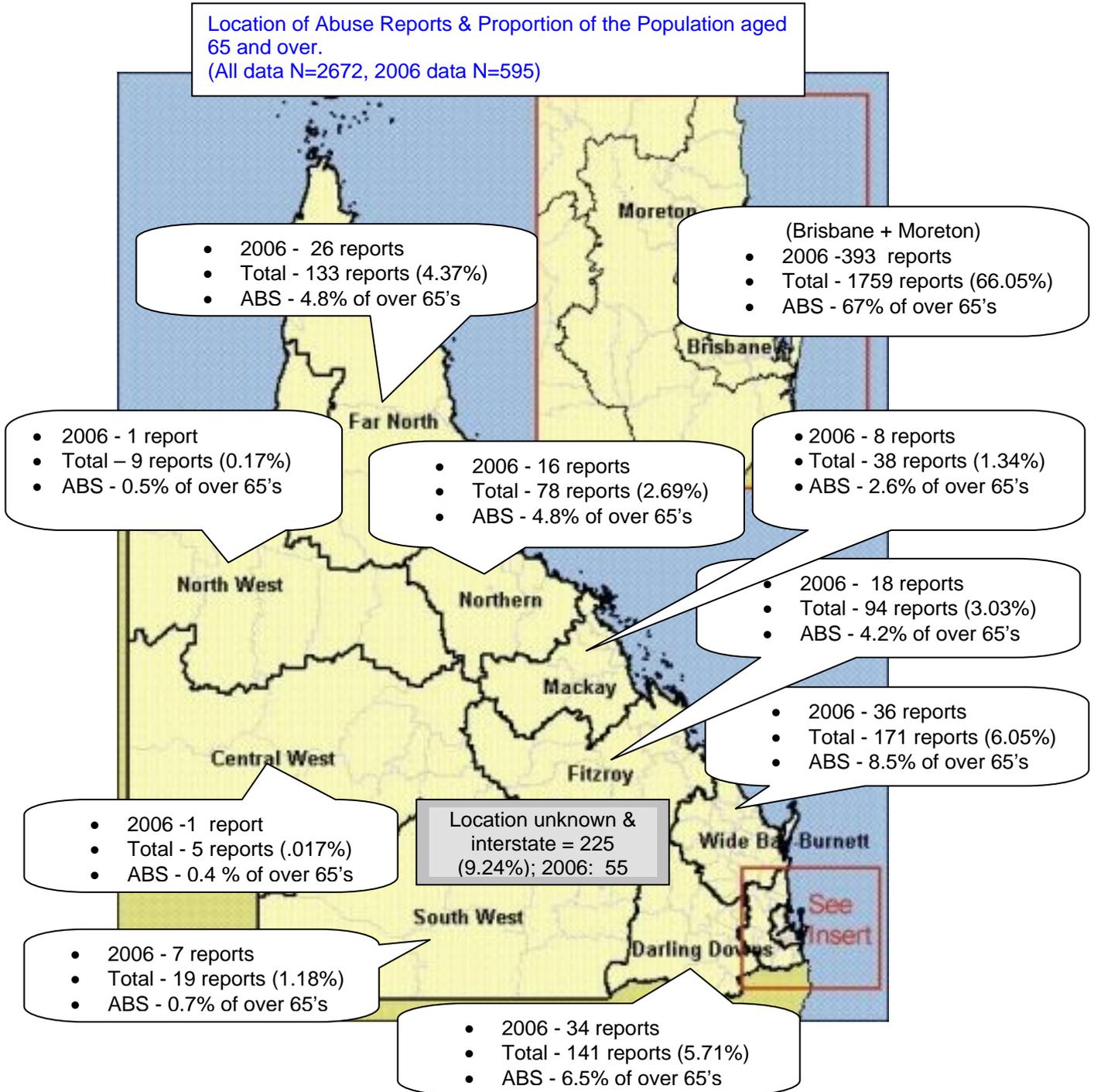
As in previous years Psychological Abuse of older people has been the most predominant form of primary abuse recorded by the Helpline, with 42% (253) of calls being in relation to psychological abuse, followed by 34% (205) being in relation to Financial Abuse, refer to Figure 2.



*Figure 2. Primary Abuse types recorded from Helpline calls*

## Location

The map of Queensland, below, illustrates the number of calls per statistical division recorded from Helpline calls, as well as the proportion of people aged 65 years and over in each division (based on ABS 2003 census data). The map compares data from the total number of calls taken by the EAPU and the current year's calls:



## Gender Analysis

Women (72.1%) remain the main targets of elder abuse reported to the EAPU Helpline.

Abused	2005/2006		All Data (01/11/99 to 30/06/06)	
	Records	Percent	Records	Percent
Female	429	72.10%	1962	73.43%
Male	165	27.73%	699	26.16%
Unknown	1	0.17%	11	0.41%
<i>Totals</i>	<i>595</i>	<i>100.00%</i>	<i>2672</i>	<i>100.00%</i>

Alleged Abuser	2005/2006		All Data (01/11/99 to 30/06/06)	
	Records	Percent	Records	Percent
Female	251	42.40%	1117	41.80%
Male	316	53.21%	1418	53.07%
Unknown	28	4.39%	137	5.13%
<i>Totals</i>	<i>595</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>2672</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 2. Gender of abused and abuser.

Across the board, for all types of abuse reported to the Helpline, males remained the largest group of perpetrator; as shown in Table 2 above and Figure 3. Although, it should be noted that these differences were small.

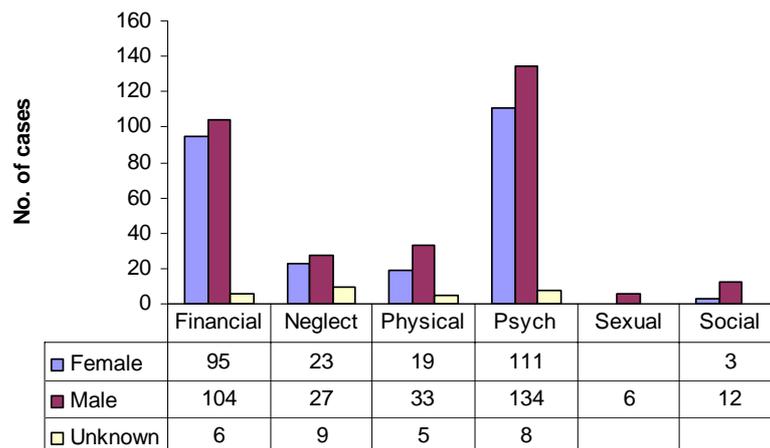


Figure 3. Types of abuse and gender of abuser

Figure 4 illustrates that women between the ages of 70 and 84 years were the main targets of abuse. Older men aged between 80-90 years of age were also at higher risk of being victims of elder abuse (refer to Fig. 4).

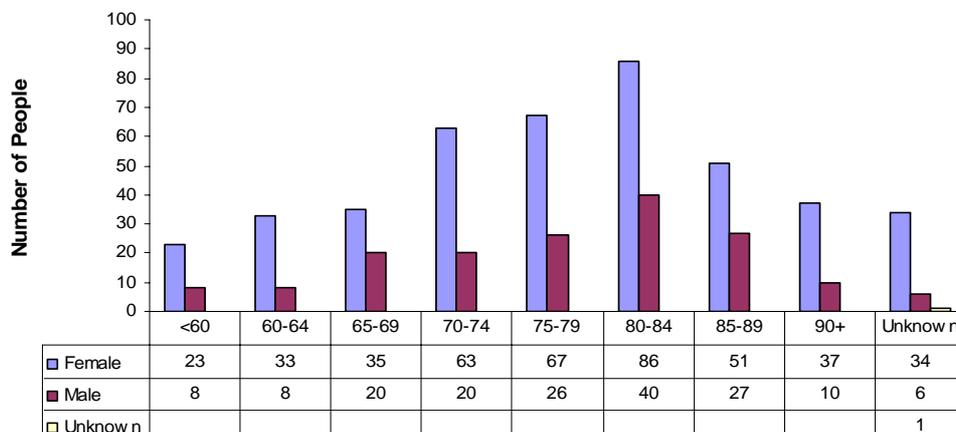


Figure 4. Types of abuse by age and gender.

## Risk Factor Analysis of the Abused

Risk factor analysis of victims of elder abuse was broken into three main categories: health, financial and environmental. Most (68.7%) of the older abused people had some type of health risk recorded. Figures 5 & 6 show a breakup of the physical and psychological risk factors recorded for the 2005/06 year.

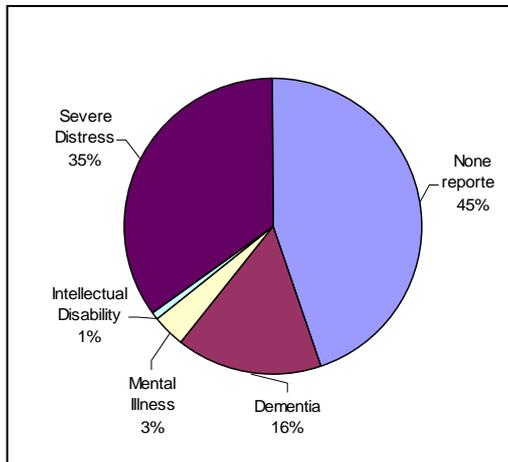


Figure 5. Psychological risk factors of abused persons

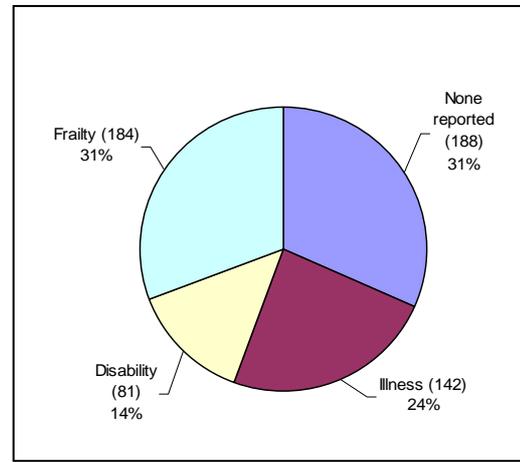


Figure 6. Physical risk factors of abused.

57% of calls to the EAPU Helpline identified that dependence on and by others for financial support was a major contributor to abuse. That is that the older person now relied on another person to help provide for them or they were financially supporting other family members.

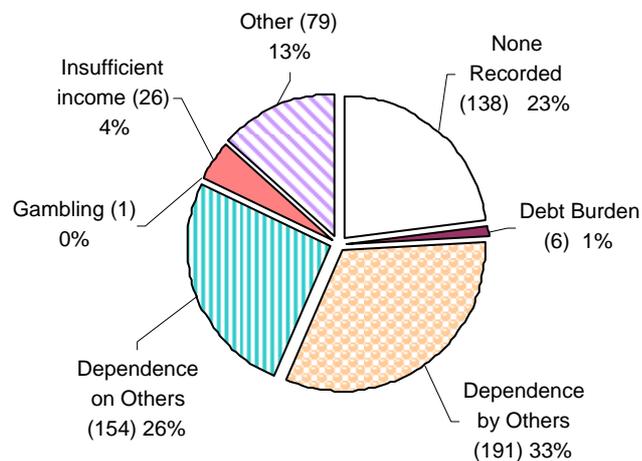


Figure 7. Financial risk factors of abused older persons.

### **Cultural Background of the Abused**

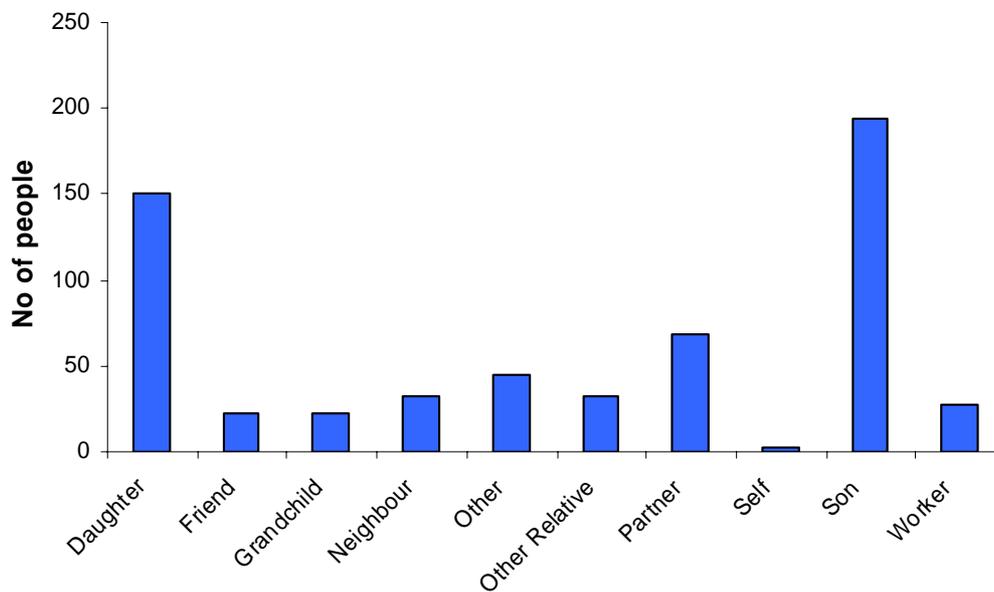
Of calls received during the reporting year, 5% of victims were identified as coming from a non-English speaking background and 2% identified as from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. For all data collected from Helpline reports, 6% of reports were identified as being from a non-English speaking background and 1.4% of callers identified as Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander, refer to Table 3.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>2005-2006</b>	<b>All Data</b>
N.E.S.B	29	164
Aboriginal	11	33
Torres Strait Islander	1	4
Total:	41	201

*Table 3. Ethnicity of abused.*

### **Alleged Abuser Analysis**

Adult children abusing elderly parents are again the highest proportion of perpetrators of elder abuse (Refer to Figure 8), constituting 58% of elder abuse notifications to the Helpline. As with previous years, the adult son again remains the highest individual category of abuser while adult daughters are the second highest.



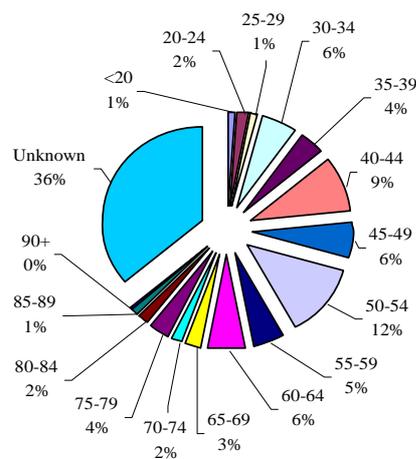
*Figure 8. Relationship of the abuser.*

Across the board for all abuse types, except physical and sexual abuse, sons were the main perpetrators of abuse reported to the Helpline (refer to Table 4). Friends of the older person were mainly reported to the Helpline as perpetrators of financial abuse (7%), after sons (39%) and daughters (29%). Note that although there would be a much higher proportion of daughters rather than sons providing care to their parents, adult sons feature in far greater numbers in neglect reports.

<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Financial</i>	<i>Neglect</i>	<i>Physical</i>	<i>Psych</i>	<i>Sexual</i>	<i>Social</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Daughter</b>	60	13	9	68		1	<b>151</b>
<b>Son</b>	80	20	14	72		8	<b>194</b>
<b>Grandchild</b>	10	4	1	7			<b>22</b>
<b>Other Relative</b>	10	4	1	14	2	1	<b>32</b>
<b>Worker</b>	6	8	5	6	2		<b>27</b>
<b>Friend</b>	15	2	1	3	1		<b>22</b>
<b>Neighbour</b>	1		3	27		1	<b>32</b>
<b>Partner</b>	5	3	18	37	1	4	<b>68</b>
<b>Self</b>		2					<b>2</b>
<b>Other</b>	18	3	5	19			<b>45</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>595</b>

*Table 4. Relationship of Alleged Abuser and Type of Abuse 2005/06 (N=595)*

Analysis of age showed that adults between 40 – 54 years were the primary abusers for elder abuse calls made to the Helpline (refer to *Figure 9*). These figures correspond with data that adult children (refer to Table 4) are the primary perpetrators of elder abuse as reported to the Helpline.



**Figure 9. Abuser age ranges.**

## Notifier Analysis

Notifiers of elder abuse to the Helpline were again predominantly the older person (26%) seeking options, support and information for themselves. The second highest was workers (24%). Daughters were the third highest group who called the Helpline in relation to suspected elder abuse situations (22%). Refer to Figure 10.

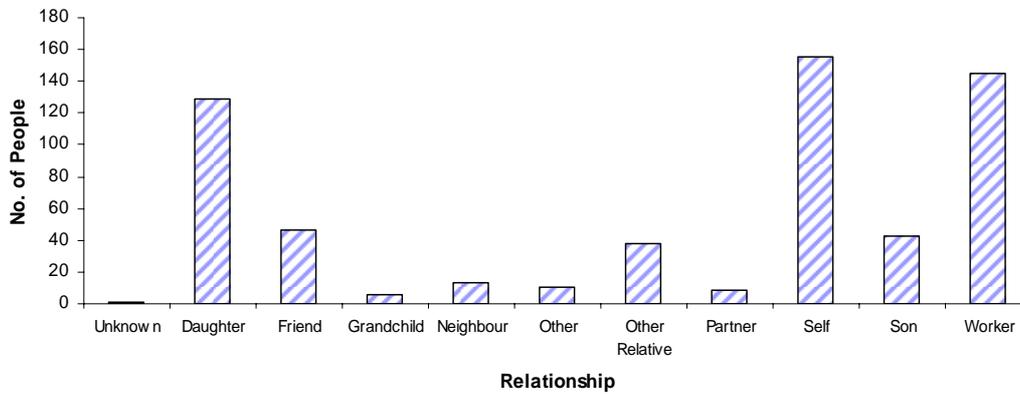


Figure 10. Notifiers of Elder Abuse to EAPU Helpline.

The majority of notifiers were made aware of the EAPU through professional knowledge (18%) and referrals from other services (30%) and accessing the telephone directory (18%). This may be as a result of training by the EAPU to service providers, raising the profile of the EAPU and the role of the Helpline as a generalist information and referral service with the ability to support the caller through the process of gathering support to meet their specific needs.

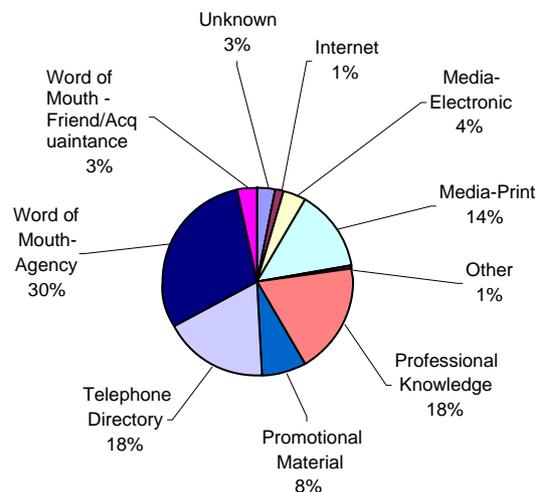


Figure 11. How did the notifiers find out about the Helpline?

## ***Referral Options***

All calls to the Helpline can be considered to be provided with assistance. Callers are given options of service providers who specialise in the fields for which they are seeking assistance. Assistance could include general information through to specific referral options. Even if the caller is already aware of the options, these are discussed and support is provided by the trained operators.

Staff members are trained telephone counsellors and are sometimes required to look beyond the presenting enquiry to provide a more holistic response. Areas of sensitivity include hearing or speech impairment, early stage dementia, loss & grief, suicide intentions, victims of crime etc.

Of the 595 individual elder abuse reports for 2005/06, referral options were provided to the following areas (definitions for each area are listed below Table 5):

<b>Referral Option (Service Area)</b>	<b>No.</b>
Capacity	385
Complaints (consumer)	106
Counselling	349
General	150
Health	277
Legal	337
Accommodation	110
Financial	164
Safety & Protection	398
Support & General Advocacy	112
Total referral options provided	2388

*Table 5. Types of referrals given to callers to the Helpline.*

### **Helpline Database: Referral Options**

Accommodation: Options specific to an accommodation related issue.

Examples include; emergency accommodation, carer's respite, public housing, tenant advocacy etc.

Counselling: Specific counselling options.

Examples include; crisis counselling, hospital (social worker), relationships counselling, community health, etc.

Complaints & Disputes: Specific complaint/dispute options.

Examples include; Aged Care Complaints, Dispute Resolution, Health & Rights Commission, Queensland Aged and Disability Advocacy, Ombudsman, etc.

Financial: Specific Financial options. Examples include; Bank, Centrelink, Public Trustee etc.

Capacity Issues: Options provided in cases involving capacity issues. Examples include; ACAT, GP, Guardianship and Administration Tribunal, Office of the Adult Guardian, Public Trustee etc.

Health & Well-being: Specific options provided relevant to client(s) health & Well-being. Examples include; Community Health, HACC Services, GP, Nursing services, mental health services, Senior's Groups etc.

Legal (Non Domestic Violence): Specific legal options provided. These options are provided in situations where the client(s) requires legal advice and/or support. This category does not involve D&FV situations. Examples include; Community Legal Service, Private solicitor, Qld Legal Aid, etc.

General: This category includes an array of general referral options. Examples include; local councils, transport, information services etc.

Safety & Protection: This category includes options focussing on the safety and protection of the client(s); this includes referrals appropriate to situations involving domestic and family violence. Examples include; Child safety department, Court Support, Domestic Violence Services, Seniors' Advocacy, Information & Legal Service (SAILS), Police etc.

Support and General Advocacy: This category includes options for situations where the client(s) may require support and some form of advocacy.

Examples include; Alzheimers Association, Carer's Queensland, Queensland Aged and Disability Advocacy (QUADA), etc.

### **Helpline Evaluation**

An ongoing evaluation of the EAPU Helpline was instigated in May 2006. Previously the EAPU undertook periodic surveys of callers to determine the effectiveness of this Helpline and although somewhat satisfactory, it was determined that a continuous process of feedback has greater potential for service improvement.

Various evaluation methods have been explored and little assistance could be found in the literature about the most effective method of evaluating an anonymous Helpline. The EAPU decided on a survey method either conducted at the end of a call or posted/faxed to the caller. Necessarily the post/fax method requires some identifying details, however a survey form is not linked to any call records or data and details such as names addresses/fax numbers etc are not retained.

The evaluation survey forms collect information on three areas: 1). was the caller treated with respect/professionalism; 2). did the caller feel supported and understood; and 3). were the referral options useful. A five point scale was used to determine the level of caller satisfaction in these three areas by the caller rating their level of agreement or disagreement with a statement pertaining to each area. A score of 5 indicated strong agreement (high satisfaction), while 1 indicated strong disagreement (Low satisfaction).

For client safety and other reasons it was not always appropriate to survey all calls. Also some callers did not wish to participate and others failed to return the posted/faxed evaluation when they did agree. However, the response rate for May/June was still quite good with 38 or 26% of calls evaluated. The total calls logged for that period included 100 elder abuse reports and 44 general enquires, (Note that general enquiries are not recorded as rigorously as the elder abuse reports and the focus of the survey is for elder abuse callers). Details for these 38 evaluations are as follows:

Type of Call Evaluated

Elder Abuse Report	34 (90%)
Request for Information/Brochures etc	02 (5%)
Request for Training/awareness session	02 (5%)

Caller Providing Evaluation

Service Provider	10 (26%)
Family, Friend/community member	21 (55%)
Abused older person	07 (19%)

Collection method

Mail/Fax	11 (30%)
Phone	27 (70%)

The mean score for Respect/professionalism was 4.9 (Highly satisfied), Support and Understood = 4.9 (Highly satisfied) and Usefulness of Information = 4.8 (Highly satisfied). There was no difference between scores collected via phone or via post/fax. Service providers, community members/friends or the older person themselves all rated their experience with the Helpline very highly as shown by the following chart

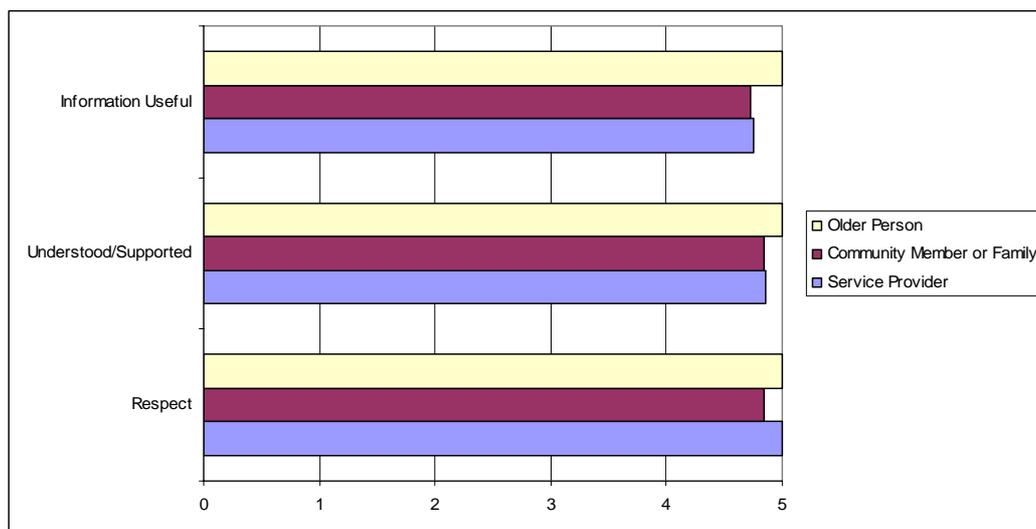


Figure 12. Level of Satisfaction with Helpline Service

The caller was also asked to provide suggested improvements to the Helpline service or any other comments. As can be seen by the table below, the caller was very appreciative of the Helpline service while the most common “critique” (4 comments) was that the caller was hoping the EAPU could provide a case management or similar service. Generally the comments reflect the satisfaction callers have with the Helpline service and the high level of skill EAPU Helpline operators have in dealing with these complex and sensitive situations.

Suggestions/Comments provided by Helpline Callers
Access to information about EAPU especially for isolated people from CALD communities
No suggestions - prompt attention and excellent follow up around the case were greatly appreciated. Did well!
No suggestions but the Helpline was a needed service and was very good.
No suggestions, a very good service, very knowledgeable
Expected EAPU to be able to do case work.
I appreciated that I was allowed to utilise the speaker / intercom to open line for client to speak and hear.
Call was answered immediately which was good. Person who answered seems to have very good understanding of D&FV issues / concerns.
Perhaps more information and leaflets could be distributed. I am a librarian and we had no information in our library.
Info was on the ball. Confidence now that mother will get proper care she needs.
More TV advertising. Heard from friend.
Information will assist with other clients with similar needs.
Honesty was appreciated.
"Trish" was the mediator who was compassionate, understanding, seemed especially intuitive with my problem and was able to use the information positively. Your organisation is a very necessary one and was fortunate to have spoken to the lady mentioned above.
No. happy with the help received.
Listened and given ear.
Would have liked a case manager.
None. Used service before and found it useful.
Extend to 24 hour service for emergencies. Have links with local community agencies that can give support and follow up calls.
Got more help than I did from counsellor at D.V. last year and also counsellor at Relationships Australia. Don't want a divorce - want help to manage husband's injury (brain damage).
Miss Patricia McArthur was helpful, kind appreciative and provided the right contacts. RSVP if you wish. Thank you
Hoping someone could come out and solve the problems immediately
Unsolvable situation
Would like EAPU to do case management

## Section 2.2 Community Education

### *Training and Awareness sessions*

During the 2005-2006 financial year 93 training sessions and 46 awareness raising sessions were conducted throughout Queensland. Most of the training and awareness raising sessions were conducted within the South East and Central regions where workers were established or within driving distance of the regional offices. Although the Central Qld regional worker was part-time Table 6 indicates that where a worker is present in the region this may facilitate greater awareness of the EAPU and enhance the ability to respond more readily to education requests in that area.

<b>Awareness Raising by Region</b>	<b>Number of sessions</b>	<b>Numbers attending</b>	<b>Length of Sessions (hrs)</b>	<b>Preparation Time (hrs)</b>	<b>Travel Time (hrs)</b>
South East Qld	29	802	23.15	14	42.45
South West Qld	5	67	3.75	2	13
Central Qld	7	301	3.75	28.7	18.25
Nth Qld	5	68	4.5	2.5	8
<i>Total Awareness Raising</i>	46	1238	35.15	47.7	81.7
<b>Training by Region</b>	<b>Number of sessions</b>	<b>Numbers attending</b>	<b>Length of Sessions (hrs)</b>	<b>Preparation Time (hrs)</b>	<b>Travel Time (hrs)</b>
South East Qld	71	1806	166.55	79.75	127.35
South West Qld	9	94	10.5	3.25	22.25
Central Qld	11	151	19.5	17	32.55
Nth Qld	2	58	2.5	1.5	5
<i>Total Training</i>	93	2109	199.05	101.5	187.15
<b>Total Education Sessions:</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>3334</b>	<b>233.2</b>	<b>148.7</b>	<b>266.85</b>

*Table 6. Training and Awareness Raising session break-down for 2005-2006.*

### *Evaluations*

#### **a) Training**

Evaluations received from participants who received training from the EAPU have provided positive feedback on their experience and the information they received.

On all six measures of elder abuse and elder abuse issues participants indicated that their knowledge increased:

Knowledge about Elder Abuse:	0.9+
Recognising signs:	1.1+
Know what to do:	1.3+
Know where to refer:	1.3+
Know their rights & responsibilities:	1.1+
Understanding of Cross cultural issues:	1.3+

Scores were calculated from 1,128 evaluations returned from 2,109 participants of EAPU training sessions in 2005/06 (refer to Table 6).

### **b) Awareness Raising**

46 face to face community education sessions were conducted by the EAPU around the state.

Evaluations of EAPU awareness sessions were commenced in early 2006 and 117 completed forms were available for analysis for the 2005/06 year. Using a three point scale (3 – yes, 2 – unsure and 1 – no) participants rated their increase in knowledge about elder abuse. 90.6% indicated that their knowledge did increase. 96.6% said that they found the information useful and 94.9% said that they now know who to contact for assistance with elder abuse situations.

### ***Promotional Activities***

The EAPU was involved in various promotional activities throughout the year, which included:

- 4 senior's expos were attended where information was disseminated via a display only (At 6 other expos the EAPU provided a display and also provided an elder abuse presentation, these 6 events are included in the face to face sessions above).
- 6 Radio interviews or feature stories were participated in by the EAPU. These consisted of 2 by ABC Radio National and 2 by the National Indigenous Radio Service as well as 4EB (Multicultural) and ABC Longreach. These generated significant interest in elder abuse and are an effective awareness raising activity.
- 2 Newspaper interviews participated in by the EAPU resulted in feature stories in the Sunday Mail and the Townsville Bulletin.

Presentations and events were also undertaken by the Senior's Enquiry Line where the EAPU was promoted and information and resource material on elder abuse is always distributed

### ***EAPU Website***

The EAPU website has been accessed by an increasing number of people during 2005-2006, as shown by the Trendline in Figure 13. The unique number of visitors is the number of new people accessing the website each day. That is, a person may get view the website several times that day and they are only counted once. However the number of visits counts the number of times people visit the website – this includes them even if they visit the website multiple times in the one day. The number of "Hits" is the number of downloads a person makes. Of special interest is the number of unique visitors, as this is an indicator of people accessing the EAPU website and also the "number of visits" which indicates the number of people visiting the website on multiple occasions in the one day from the same location, refer to Table 7.

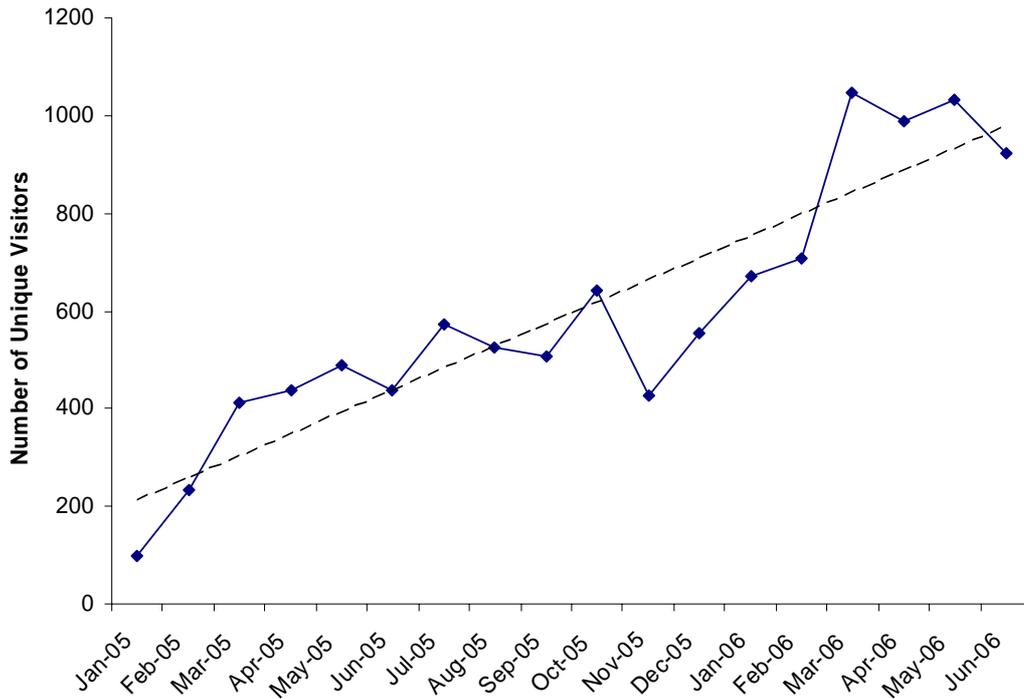


Figure 13. Unique Visitors to the EAPU website 2005-2006.

<a href="http://www.eapu.com.au">www.eapu.com.au</a>				
Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits
Jul 2005	573	741	3132	10357
Aug 2005	524	759	3368	10023
Sept 2005	508	694	2830	8658
Oct 2005	643	935	5143	14207
Nov 2005	425	570	1827	5830
Dec 2005	553	881	2213	6647
Jan 2006	672	900	2804	7012
Feb 2006	708	964	3468	10729
Mar 2006	1048	1424	5671	15244
Apr 2006	990	1347	5184	12146
May 2006	1031	1360	5535	13605
Jun 2006	923	1196	4147	9234
Total:	8598	11771	45322	123692

Table 7. Website statistics break-down.

## Section 2.3 Multidisciplinary Peer Support Network for Elder Abuse (PSN)

The PSN regional and remote membership is gradually attaining a greater multidisciplinary flavour with 70 active members, of which 22 are community based health workers, 19 are centre based health workers (aged care/hospitals), 7 are family violence workers and the remaining 22 are community workers of various agencies.

There is a reasonable spread of members across the state although penetration into more remote towns still needs to be achieved. The following table provides the towns where the remote and regional PSN members are located.

Town	Town	Town	Town
ALPHA	CHARTERS TOWERS	MACKAY	ROMA
ANDERGROVE	CUNNAMULLA	MILES	SAPPHIRE
ARAMAC	DALBY	MITCHELL	ST GEORGE
BARCALDINE	EIDSVOLD	MONTO	TAMBO
BILOELA	EMERALD	MOUNT ISA	THALLON
BLACKALL	GLENELLA	MOURA	THEODORE
BUCASIA	GOOVIGEN	NORTH MACKAY	THURINGOWA
CHARLEVILLE	LONGREACH	OAKEY	TOWNSVILLE

All members of the network are contacted by phone at least once every three months to discuss any elder abuse/seniors issues relating to the member or the region. All members are also posted the quarterly EAPU newsletter and generally contacted whenever an EAPU worker is in their region. Members willingly accept contact from the EAPU and indicate that they enjoy the support.

Members prefer contact to be initiated by the EAPU and it is usually at this time that information is collected and disseminated. The membership rarely contact each other but do contact the EAPU if they have an abuse or senior's issue to discuss. Depending on the individual member's desired mode of contact, the EAPU utilises mainly phone or email although newsletters are posted as members prefer a hard copy of these.

For 2006/07 the EAPU will undertake 2 training teleconferences each year with topics determined by the members. This is in response to members requests for these and also it is seen as a good way of establishing a network identity and focus for network recruitment and information sharing.

## **Part 3 Regional and Other reports**

### ***South – East Region (Maya Zetlin)***

This region, being the most populated one in Queensland and including the highest concentration of older population, has again presented us with the dilemma of balancing requests, expectations and core business with availability of time and limited resources.

Increased awareness among service providers and the community, about the existence of elder abuse, resulted in increase of requests for training and information sessions as well as in calls to the elder abuse Helpline. The more information that we deliver the more requests we receive and the busier our Helpline gets. Gone are the days when we had to worry about marketing and promoting ourselves in order to generate business. Now we are more concerned about balancing our work load by prioritising requests, reaching groups outside the metropolitan areas, leaving time slots for unexpected and major requests and putting our 'wish list' of projects that can wait on the back burner.

By now we have our 'regulars' who request our training and awareness raising sessions periodically and they are very much valued by us and are given special consideration in fitting them into our busy schedule.

Some of the ongoing requests include QUT and Griffiths Universities, various TAFE colleges, vocational institutions, volunteer services, respite centres and nursing services. We also have ongoing requests from older people's groups, older women's groups, general community groups and special interest groups.

This year was marked by increase requests by various departments in a variety of hospitals to assist with protocol development, provide education sessions to workers and hold information sessions for clients.

Some of the larger Forums we were invited to present at included nursing, aged care and HACC services conferences, forums on financial and consumer matters, multicultural workshops, launching of elder abuse protocols, regional forums, Department of Veteran Affairs forum and other departmental initiatives.

My public speaking have extended to participating on the Radio National program on elder abuse, had a session on Radio 4EB's English program, responded to a few newspaper enquiries and was interviewed by a researcher for a PhD thesis on elder abuse.

I belong to a number of mainstream and multicultural networks but due to limited time I mainly keep in contact through the receipt of minutes and communication via E-mails, however, occasionally I attend major or significant events. This financial year some of the meetings I attended included the Caboolture and Redcliffe Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence inaugural consultations, the Redcliffe pilot project for asset management by seniors, IWSS AGM, DVRC AGM, UQ consultation on Ageing and Cultural Diversity, The Police Commissioner's Seniors Taskforce, Office of the Adult Guardian's consultation for a multicultural framework and the Redcliffe DV network for coordinating DV month activities.

In this busy schedule it is very essential to accommodate time for professional development in order to keep up with current and emerging issues, strategies, initiatives and legal processes. Among the ones attended by me were a seminar on Anxiety & Depression in older people at the RBH Geriatric Mental Health Outreach Centre; Train the Trainer workshop on Transcultural Issues in Aged Care Mental Health, delivered by Greg Turner from the Queensland Transcultural Mental Health

Centre; information session on the New Family Law System, delivered by the Women's Legal Community Centre; and attending the elder abuse conference in Victoria to mark the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

My role also includes the responsibility to support the currently operational elder abuse Coordinated Community Responses (CCR), attend their meetings when possible and provide any requested information, support and training. Reports provided by each of the CCR's are included in this Annual Report and they demonstrate the invaluable role that the CCR's play in generating and implementing strategies that address elder abuse in their regions. And last but not least I coordinate the Prevention of Elder Abuse in CALD Communities (PEACC) Taskforce and its activities are also outlined further in this Annual Report.

### ***South West Region (Les Jackson)***

The EAPU made several trips to this region during the reporting year. Catching up with members of the South West Area Network (SWAN) in July 2005 and providing training to the members was one highlight. Assisting the Far West Multipurpose Healing Service in St George with organising a forum in Domestic & Family Violence Month was also another achievement. It was a successful forum mainly due to the support of the Office of the Adult Guardian whose contribution of a guest speaker, Julie Newton Principal Liaison Office, was greatly appreciated.

Extensive travel continues to be a limiting factor in servicing this region, however the current resource issues within the EAPU have impacted on the level of service that can now be provided. Other than my role as the South West Regional worker, I have also been required to undertake commitments in the Townsville area due to the restricted terms of employment and subsequent termination of the EAPU's worker for the Northern Region. Note that Maya Zetlin, the regional worker for the South East is also currently undertaking EAPU commitments in the Northern Region around Cairns, along with her many other projects.

Other factors impacting on this and all other regions also relate to staffing. My current position is that of the Senior Project Officer which is responsible for staff supervision and providing comment and input into policy or by providing responses to emerging issues on elder abuse. The 2005/06 year saw a much greater interest by media in elder abuse issues, some sparked by shocking elder abuse situations coming to light but a significant amount generated by EAPU initiatives such as producing and sending out media statements, reports, research etc. This heightened interest naturally generates greater demand on all our services areas and lessens the worker's ability to service their own and other regions. It also places an expectation that the EAPU will provide comment, statements or reports on areas of current public interest. Unfortunately I cannot see that the EAPU will have the ability to do this in the future as already workers are at (or over) their maximum capacity. My main task in supervision seem to be counselling staff on how to say "no" and not feel guilty. It should also be noted that many EAPU research or resource projects were undertaken by students on placement; however this was discontinued in 2006 due to the time constraints of EAPU workers to provide adequate supervision for these placements.

Although I have enjoyed the work in this region and the many wonderful people I have met, it will be my last report as I will be resigning in early 2006. I wish the people in this region well, it has been a real pleasure working with them.

### **Central Region (Les Jackson)**

Verna Halsey secured a social work position with Rockhampton's Mental Health service in June 2006 and has left a big vacancy to fill for this region. Verna commenced work with the EAPU in November 2001 and has been a tireless worker in both her roles as an Elder Abuse Project Officer and as a Safety Link Advisor with the Safe and Confident Living Program. The increasing profile of the Senior's Breakfast is a prime example of Verna's initiatives. Held each year to celebrate Senior's Week, it brings together seniors and students and volunteers from Rockhampton SHS, Central Qld Institute of TAFE, Darumbal Youth Services and Jack's House Youth Accommodation. The students and volunteers do the preparation and serving of the food which is mainly donated by local businesses. Supported with funding from the Dept. of Communities the free breakfast has become very popular with seniors and involves the whole community. This reporting year the breakfast was opened by Her Excellency Quentin Bryce A.C., Governor of Queensland and is a testament to Verna's excellent organisational skills.

During her employment with the EAPU Verna provided a neat 100 training sessions to 1,120 workers across Central Queensland as well as 58 awareness raising talks to 1,067 seniors. Many key contacts and networks were established by Verna in this region, particularly in the more remote areas. Establishing a Safe & Confident Living Social group was another key activity this reporting year. Verna was also able to secure funding for computer equipment for this group during the year.

The EAPU wishes Verna well in her future career and thanks her for the enormous work she contributed to both the EAPU and Safe & Confident Living programs.

### **Northern Region (Les Jackson)**

The Northern Region was serviced by a ten hour per week worker, deArn Dixon, on a casual basis and working from home. The arrangement was considered unworkable and certainly unfair on both deArn who was unable to plan and fulfil commitments under this arrangement as well for the northern region who had a very limited window of access to deArn. This arrangement was therefore withdrawn this year and the northern region is now to be serviced by Brisbane based workers. The EAPU wishes deArn all the best with her work in her other role as a Gambling Help Education Officer.

While deArn was still with us she organised a major forum in Cairns with the assistance of Maya Zetlin from the EAPU's Brisbane office. The forum "Addressing Elder Abuse in our Community" was very successful with presentations being provided

by the EAPU, Queensland Police Service, Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service, The Guardianship & Administration Tribunal and Centrelink. The northern reference group was also re-established at that time.

Several trips were conducted by Brisbane based workers during this year, including an invitation to speak with the Palm Island community on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in June 2006, organised by Shirley Graham the Community Services



The flight to Palm Is takes in some beautiful scenery

Officer (Seniors) from the Department of Communities. I presented at this session, which took the form of a general discussion with lots of contributions by all those involved. Those present were very much in favour of prevention strategies and saw, for example, that parenting skills for their children who are raising their own families would go a long way to addressing some forms of abuse. Further trips to the northern region have also been planned to take place before the end of 2006.

### ***The West Moreton Taskforce for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (Robyn Hargreaves)***

The most exciting news for the Taskforce in the past twelve months has been the allocation of funding amounting to \$ 49 918.00 for a twelve month project under the Queensland Government, Department of Communities, *Building Links* Funding Initiative.

The West Moreton Taskforce for the Prevention of Elder Abuse has been convened for a period of seven years and has undertaken a range of activities which, to date, have been primarily unfunded. The Taskforce comprises a range of local community service representatives including Bluecare, EAPU, Ipswich City Council, Ipswich Community Aid, Ipswich 60 and Better, Ipswich Women's centre Against Domestic Violence, Office of the Public Trustee and Queensland Health. The Taskforce has demonstrated over a long period that there is a high level of support, diversity and commitment to addressing the issue of elder abuse at a regional level. The underlying principles of the Taskforce are that collaborative practice and the sharing of resources can only serve to enhance community responses to elder abuse.

Funding provided by the *Building Links* Funding Initiative will assist to build on the research undertaken on behalf of the Taskforce, by the University of Queensland, Boilerhouse Community Engagement Research Centre, in 2004. The research highlighted a number of activities that were required to address identified community needs including provision of information and resources, service provider training to enhance recognition of elder abuse and collaborative practice, enhanced by appropriate service policies and interagency protocols.

The Taskforce has appreciated the support of Ipswich Community Aid Incorporated who have agreed to auspice the project. The Taskforce will continue its commitment to the project in an advisory capacity to the project worker and will continue to focus on building the capacity of local communities in the West Moreton region to take ownership of local strategies and responses.

As always, the support and encouragement of the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit, has been greatly appreciated.

### ***The Gold Coast Elder Abuse Prevention Taskforce (Rebecca Coleiro)***

In October 2005 the Department of Veterans Affairs funded the Gold Coast Elder Abuse Prevention Taskforce, through the auspice of Lifeline Gold Coast, to undertake an elder abuse prevention project on the Gold Coast. This project continues the Taskforce work on elder abuse prevention using the products developed through the pilot Elder Abuse Prevention Project initiated in 2004.

Being Informed – the Gold Coast Elder Abuse Project provides information on financial and legal issues for older people, targeting veterans and associated groups and service providers on the Gold Coast. Increasing information on the financial and legal issues for the veteran community may contribute to a more informed service sector and reduce the vulnerability of the older population to elder abuse.

Information will be disseminated through activities such as:

- Printing and distributing the resources on elder abuse to service providers and the community.
- “Training” service providers to and developing a greater network of people aware of elder abuse and related issues.
- Presentations to veterans groups and service providers on aspects of elder abuse with an emphasis on financial and legal issues.
- Conducting forums on Financial abuse and Legal protection on the Gold Coast
- Presentations to members of the veteran community, students and service providers were conducted through a program of group information sessions.

A ‘Pathways for Managing Elder Abuse’ Forum will be held in September 2006 to launch the Elder Abuse Referral Pathways poster developed by the Taskforce. During the forum service providers, veterans and seniors will be briefed on current elder abuse issues. Speakers will address issues relating to legal and financial abuse using case studies and pathways for effective referrals.

The project is funded for 12 months with a worker 10 hours per week finishing in late 2006. During the period November 2005 to June 2006 presentations were undertaken with approximately 350 people attending. It is expected that presentations will be concentrated during the period August to November 2006 to cover Seniors Week and various other presentation opportunities.

### ***Fraser Coast Taskforce for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (Lyn Coveney)***

The highlight of this year has been the launch of the re-written “Pathways of Care” book. The launch occurred on June 15<sup>th</sup> (International RAGE day) with about 30 community members attending. Department of Communities Project Officer Catherine Jansen carried out the official launch, while local MP Andrew McNamara and Councilor Jan Rohozinski welcomed those present. To accompany the book a CD-ROM is currently being produced so that all the members of the Task Force receive a book and CD.

Other Elder Abuse prevention activity has been in the form of community talks and staff training.

Hervey Bay City Council’s project “Connecting People – Connecting Points” has been very successful in identifying isolated (and ‘at risk’) residents. The program identifies isolated people, contacts them and organizes a ‘buddy’ to go to activities of interest to them which already exist in the community.



Once the person feels happy and secure at the activity of choice, the buddy moves on to the next person identified. Unfortunately, funding was only for 12 months – however, many isolated people benefited from their inclusion in the project!

The Older Men Unlimited group ran a very successful “Mens’ Health Day”. Over 140 senior men and some partners heard guest speakers, enjoyed a ‘cuppa’ and found out about some activities available in the community. Feedback indicated that a yearly event would be great!!

“Seniors Project Officer” with the Hervey Bay City Council, Lyn Coveney attended an excellent conference on “Suicide Prevention” and came back to work with lots of ideas and resources to help develop a “Safe Community”. She will also attend a Conference in Townsville in October to further investigate this theme.

Living in a rural (although large) community means that many conferences & seminars are a fair distance away – the cost is sometimes prohibitive too. Extra funding for trained persons to enhance their knowledge would be very beneficial – that’s on my wish list anyway!!!

### ***Prevention of Elder Abuse in CALD Communities (PEACC) Taskforce (Maya Zetlin)***

Since its formation in November 2003, The Prevention of Elder Abuse in CALD Communities (PEACC) Taskforce has been very active in keeping the focus on the compounding issues that could affect victims of elder abuse in CALD communities.

The membership of the taskforce is both stable, by workers who remained in their original jobs, and changing, due to mobility of workers or change in their job responsibilities. All who have been associated with PEACC Taskforce displayed a deep commitment to reaching its goals and a sincere concern and care for its target group.

Our meetings, seminars and forums have inherently been friendly, warm, egalitarian, informal and gastronomically fulfilling – fitting into what most people equate with a multicultural group. I hope that this description of the ‘Taskforce’s Culture’ will entice others to join.

A major initiative of designing and developing a strategy for multicultural data collection of elder abuse got off the ground by implementing a pilot program with three community organisations – Multilink Aged Community Services, Harmony Place and the Greek welfare and Aged Care Centre. We would like to acknowledge the three organisations for their willingness to embark on collecting elder abuse data and for their workers’ ongoing commitment to the advancement of the Taskforce’s goals. We envisage that at the completion of the pilot stage more organisations will join and implement data collection of elder abuse of their client group, to increase the validity and reliability of information regarding elder abuse in Queensland.

Our yearly Forum on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2005 was titled “Elder Abuse Prevention, Train the Trainer Workshop” and covered the areas of general elder abuse issues as well as compounding issues for CALD older people. An innovative component of the day included a couple of guest comedy performers that contributed to the lightening of the atmosphere and to adding a touch of humour to the otherwise serious subject.

Smaller seminar hosted by the taskforce included the “Grief, Loss & Depression in Older People, delivered by Helen Wignall and Lynn Isbel, and information about the Community Visitor Program, delivered by Pat Cartwright. A heartiest thank you to all the presenters.

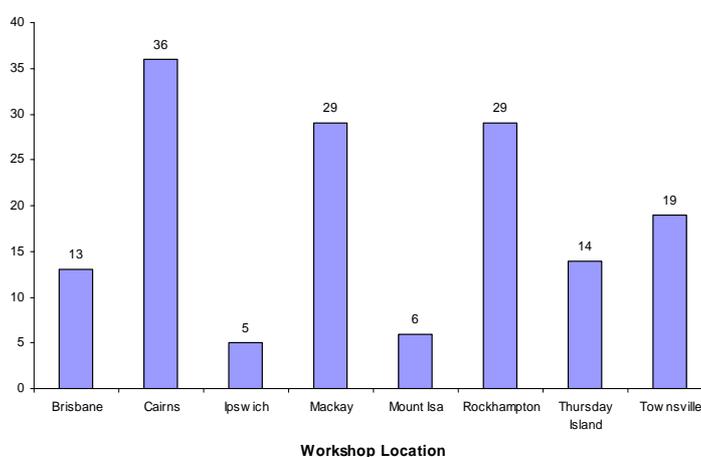
### ***Indigenous Project (Chris Procopis)***

The second round of Indigenous consultations was conducted between July and August 2005. Consultations were held in Ipswich, Mount Isa, Rockhampton, Thursday Island and Townsville. Five objectives were discussed during these consultations:

1. To identify ongoing strategies to raise awareness of the abuse of older people from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islander backgrounds,

2. To determine the general content of a video and resource kit that may be used to raise community awareness of elder abuse and that may be used to develop individual community responses to elder abuse,
3. To develop a culturally appropriate definition of elder abuse, including suitable terminology,
4. To identify and confirm systemic factors that may contribute to the occurrence of elder abuse, and
5. To identify the need for a specified indigenous service in responding to abuse, including the provision of culturally appropriate training, information and referral.

Feedback from the consultations identified risk factors contributing to elder abuse in the Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander Communities. There were approximately 150 people who returned evaluations for the consultations (refer to graph below).



**No of People attending each consultation workshop.**

Participants found the consultations useful and improved their knowledge and awareness of elder abuse and the elder abuse issues. As a whole they felt that the objectives of the consultations were met.

The consultations highlighted the need for Indigenous specific resources with a focus on cultural identity and respect for elders in the Indigenous community. Awareness was also raised with regard to the age differences of when a member of the indigenous community is considered an elder and their role as an elder in that community. Elders in the Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander communities may be as young as mid thirties. In addition to this, not all older people are considered to be Elders. Impacting on this is that the life expectancy within these communities is low compared to their non-indigenous counterparts.

Major factors contributing to elder abuse within indigenous communities identified through consultations included: 1. Past trauma/historical implications, 2. Loss of respect for elders, 3. Grandparents raising grandchildren, 4. Substance abuse, 5. Housing and 6. Lack of culturally appropriate services.

Discriminatory policies and removal of children from their families has played a significant part in the lives of indigenous people and identified as causes of violence within the community. Removal of children from their parents has also impacted on their opportunity to learn indigenous tradition and culture. Discriminatory policies banned elders from performing traditional ceremonies, teaching traditional values and language, thus undermining the role and position of elders within the Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander communities.

In Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander culture elders are responsible for passing on knowledge and traditions onto younger generations. Hence, grandparents may feel an obligation to care for grandchildren and tolerate abuse to ensure the safety and well being of younger generations.

The report from the consultations will be published in February 2007. The delay has been due to staff shortages in the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit. Recommendations from these consultations has identified the need for:

- Whole of community/government partnership to develop and implement culturally appropriate initiatives on both a state and local level
- Community decision making and responsibility to include Elders and older people in decision-making processes and to strengthen community partnerships.
- Development and production of culturally appropriate awareness raising resources.
- Awareness raising and community education with a focus on prevention and an incorporation of the health, aged care and family violence sectors.
- Delivery of information utilizing existing local and regional services to support the delivery of culturally appropriate resources and cross-service training and education.
- Improve cultural sensitivity of existing services through further research into elder abuse of Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander people and training of Indigenous workers and non-indigenous workers.
- Carers issues addressed through training and support of Indigenous carers
- The needs of grandparents raising grandchildren within Indigenous communities needs to be identified and appropriate services developed.
- Funding needed for development and maintenance of community orientated activities and events.
- Housing and quality of housing improved within the Indigenous community.
- Consultation with Indigenous communities to evaluate the level and depth of elder abuse in Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander communities.
- Establish mentoring programs to teach younger generations the Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander culture and tradition.
- Support for community agencies to coordinate community orientated activities and events for awareness raising and cross service delivery of resources.

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The staff of the EAPU wish to extend their appreciation to all the services and individuals who supported their efforts this year to build an abuse free community for Queensland's seniors.