

# Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is family violence that occurs when an older person experiences controlling, harmful and hurtful relationships or behaviours used by family members or their community carers.

Elder abuse refers to a person over 60 years, or over 45 years old for Aboriginal people.

Hospitalisations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (aged 45+) due to elder abuse related assault in 2017-2019 was 1,857 people per 100,000\*.



## Emotional/Psychological Abuse

Mental stress from fear of violence, neglect, powerlessness, and shame.

### Examples:

- Verbal and non-verbal behaviours that threaten, intimidate, and repeatedly create fear.
- Coercion - making someone do something against their will.



## Neglect

The carer or family member responsible for an elderly person does not provide necessary care.

### Examples:

- Dressing an older person inappropriately for the weather conditions.
- Not providing adequate care, such as nutrition, dental and medical care (including providing medication in the correct dosage).



## Sexual Abuse

Any unwanted sexual act to an elderly person.

### Examples:

- Showing an elderly person sexual photos, videos or magazines against their will.
- Sexual assault, including unwanted sexual touch or a family member exposing themselves to an elderly person.



## Spiritual/Cultural Abuse

Power and control is used to deny an older person of their cultural and spiritual rights and practices.

### Examples:

- Stopping an elderly person from practicing spiritual or cultural practices in the home, and with others such as family and kinship network.
- Prohibiting an elderly person from attending cultural or spiritual ceremonies and events in the community.



## Social Abuse

Behaviour that prevents socialisation, attending social and community activities, and forced isolation.

### Examples:

- Stopping an elderly person from leaving the house.
- Stopping an elderly person from meeting with friends, family, and community.



## Financial Abuse

Improper use of an elderly persons money, property or resources.

### Examples:

- Stealing money or using bank cards without authorisation.
- 'Humbugging' - when someone makes unreasonable demands (usually of money) using manipulation and coercion.



## Physical Abuse

An act causing harm, pain, injury or physical coercion; including deliberately harming an older person.

### Examples:

- Pushing or tripping an older person.
- Causing an elderly person to lose balance and fall.
- Strangulation, punching, hitting, or pinching.



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