

## HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM ELDER ABUSE:

- Stay in touch with friends and keep socially active for as long as possible.
- Maintain contact with service providers such as your general practitioner.
- Avoid making important decisions after major life changes.
- Seek independent advice before making any changes to your financial or living arrangements.
- If you are feeling pressured to make a decision or sign a document, stop, wait and seek advice.
- Manage your affairs yourself for as long as possible.
- Ensure you have a valid Enduring Power of Attorney and Will.
- Consider preparing an Advance Health Directive, which outlines your wishes regarding your future health care, should you become unable to make your own decisions.



## HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you're concerned that you or someone you know is experiencing elder abuse, call the **Elder Abuse Helpline 1300 651 192** for free, confidential advice and support.

An operator will speak to you about the situation and provide confidential advice and information about the help available.

**IN AN EMERGENCY CALL  
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## DO I NEED PROOF?

You don't need to have proof to seek help. Helpline staff will determine whether or not the behaviour you're concerned about is elder abuse when you call.

This Queensland Government funded helpline is run by:



## SERVICES THAT CAN HELP WITH LEGAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

If you need help we have regionally located services to provide you with support and advice.

Brisbane: **07 3214 6333**

Cairns: **1800 062 608** or **07 4031 7179**

Hervey Bay: **07 4124 6863**

Toowoomba: **07 4616 9700**

Townsville: **07 4721 5511**

Call **1300 063 232** to access support and advice services located in:

- Gladstone
- Gold Coast
- Mackay
- Rockhampton
- Sunshine Coast

## OTHER CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Lifeline: **13 11 14**

Legal Aid Queensland: **1300 651 188**

Office of the Public Guardian: **1300 653 187**

## PUBLIC TRUSTEE

The Public Trustee provides a range of services which can protect people from elder abuse. These include Enduring Powers of Attorney, free Wills, investment, executor and financial administration services to Queenslanders.

Call **1300 360 044** or visit [www.pt.qld.gov.au](http://www.pt.qld.gov.au)



**THERE'S  
NO EXCUSE  
FOR ELDER  
ABUSE.**

[www.qld.gov.au/noexcuseforelderabuse](http://www.qld.gov.au/noexcuseforelderabuse)



Queensland  
Government

## WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

Elder abuse is any act within a relationship of trust which results in harm to an older person.

## WHO COMMITS ELDER ABUSE?

Although people often believe elder abuse is only committed by paid carers and other staff, this is not the case. Sadly, the majority of abusers are close family members.

**Elder abuse is often hidden away but it's time for that to change. Everyone in Queensland should know there's no excuse for elder abuse.**



## TYPES OF ABUSE

### Financial abuse

The most common form of elder abuse, this involves the illegal or improper use of a person's finances or property. Some common examples of this include pension skimming, misuse of ATM cards and forced transfer of assets.

### Emotional abuse

More than one-third of those experiencing elder abuse are affected by emotional abuse. This includes frightening, threatening, harassing, humiliating and intimidating an older person.

### Neglect

Neglect includes preventing service providers from providing help, or a person in a carer role neglecting an older person's physical, medical or emotional needs.

### Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse includes any kind of unwanted sexual behaviour or activity, done without consent, that makes a person feel uncomfortable, frightened, threatened or causes physical hurt.

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse is inflicting pain or injury. It includes hitting, slapping, restraining or over/under medicating.

## AVA'S STORY

After the death of her husband, Ava, 82 years old, continued to live in her own home with support from neighbours who looked out for her.

The neighbours collected her mail, took out her bin and ran some general errands for her.

An ex-family member by marriage, Paul, then reacquainted himself with Ava. When Ava fell ill and needed to go to hospital, she signed over Power of Attorney to Paul.

Over time, Paul took control of Ava's life. He ran her errands and put a padlock on the letterbox that stopped neighbours from taking in the mail for Ava.

Ava then moved to an aged care facility. While Ava was in aged care, Paul repeatedly stripped funds from Ava's account, to use for his own purposes, including for gambling.

Ava then reported the offence to the police. The police investigated the matter and charged Paul, and Paul's partner at the time, with fraud.

By enlisting help from support services, Ava was able to protect her finances and stop Paul from continuing his abuse.

If you think you, or someone you know, is experiencing financial abuse, help is available.

*These stories are based on reported scenarios. The names have been changed to protect the people involved.*

## TOM AND DOROTHY'S STORY

Dorothy had been caring for her husband Tom at home for many years. Their daughter, Julie, started telling them that she didn't think her mum was capable of providing the care her dad needed. Eventually, they agreed and Julie moved in to help care for her dad.

Shortly after moving in, Julie started belittling and berating Tom and Dorothy, telling them they had ruined her life by getting her to move in with them.

She provided no support to Dorothy for Tom's care, instead adding to demands on Dorothy's time and constantly criticising everything she did.

When they were at their most vulnerable, having been made to feel worthless by their own daughter, Julie presented them with an updated will which left the house to her instead of shared equally among Tom and Dorothy's three children. Julie claimed it was her payment for looking after them and that she deserved it all.

Worried, Dorothy called the Elder Abuse Helpline who suggested that she get her own legal advice. The helpline operator put her in touch with a range of services that could help including the seniors legal and support service who could provide assistance if a Domestic Violence protection order was required.

**Are you concerned someone you know may be experiencing elder abuse like in this story? Help is available.**