

CARE AND RESPECT

**PROJECT TO RESEARCH
ELDER ABUSE
IN CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES**

Office of the Public Advocate

JULY 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project to examine elder abuse in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities was proposed by the Public Advocate in Western Australia following the publication of research by Curtin University in 2002.

The Curtin research concluded that elder abuse occurred across all socio-economic groups and was significantly under-reported. It recommended that the issue be explored further in CALD and Aboriginal communities.

The Western Australian Government's Active Ageing Strategy allocated \$25,000 to the Office of the Public Advocate to explore the issue of elder abuse within a range of CALD communities. Almost 20% of seniors in Western Australia come from CALD backgrounds. Additional funding was received from the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering and a project officer, Ms Paula Cristoffanini, was employed to conduct further research and consult with CALD individuals and organisations about elder abuse, mistreatment and neglect in CALD communities.

The resources to conduct this project were limited and allowed employment of the project officer for approximately seven months on a two-day a week basis.

The methodology used for the research included active consultation with CALD seniors and CALD service providers in the Perth metropolitan area. As well, demographic information about CALD communities throughout Western Australia was gathered.

A reference group made up of representatives from key government agencies and CALD communities provided advice on the development, progress and report of the project.

The objectives of the project were to:

- identify whether elder abuse is an issue in CALD communities;
- begin to develop an understanding of what constitutes elder abuse in CALD communities;
- gather the views of CALD people on how best to identify and respond to elder abuse;
- identify appropriate ways to raise awareness of elder abuse in CALD communities; and
- identify priorities and strategies for the future.

More than 200 CALD seniors and more than 30 organisations working with CALD seniors were consulted during this project. The consultations with CALD seniors and service providers indicate that elder abuse is an issue in CALD communities. All of the seniors and service providers consulted were aware of instances of abuse.

The financial and time constraints meant wide consultation in regional Western Australia and with all CALD groups was not possible.

CALD seniors were considered to be at risk for a range of reasons including:

- poor English skills, particularly in relation to understanding official documents;
- social isolation and dependency on family members;
- unwillingness to disclose mistreatment or neglect because of social stigma; and
- cross-generational factors resulting in differing expectations of care and support.

This project is the first step in researching the issue of elder abuse within Western Australian, and possibly Australian, CALD communities. Although this research has important findings, its limitations prevent it from defining the extent of elder abuse in those communities. It is acknowledged that more research, more programs to raise community awareness of the issue and wider community consultation are required to explore and identify local solutions to addressing elder abuse in CALD communities.

In the past, community service delivery to CALD communities relied, in large measure, on ethno-specific services delivered in the context of immigrant settlement. More recently service delivery has been premised on mainstream services having a responsibility to service every group within Australia's diverse community. Therefore services to prevent and respond to elder abuse in CALD communities may need to be delivered in partnerships developed from within the health and ageing sector rather than from the immigration area.

This report and its suggested strategies will be presented to the Western Australian Government and both government and non-government agencies with an interest in elder abuse and CALD people.

I acknowledge the valuable contribution of the individuals and community-based organisations which participated in this research project and especially throughout the consultation process. Members of the Reference Group offered generous support and the assistance and cooperation provided by forum presenters and participants has been greatly appreciated.

Thanks are also extended to the many organisations consulted as part of the project, including the Ethnic Communities Council of WA and WA Police. The roles and responsibilities of CALD community based organisations, their professional contribution to their communities and the contribution of their workers as community people who have the best interests of their communities continually at the forefront, also need to be recognised.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering (OSIV) which provided statistical data for the profile of CALD seniors and contributed additional support to the project through representation on the Reference Group.

Michelle Scott
PUBLIC ADVOCATE
2006

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

Research and Maintenance of Statistical Data

Recommendation 1

That further research to determine the incidence of abuse and key risk factors for CALD seniors be undertaken.

Recommendation 2

That the statistical data presented in this report be used to identify and target CALD seniors for services and programs relating to elder abuse and that an up-to-date statistical profile of CALD seniors be maintained for the purposes of research, strategy development, program/service delivery and evaluation. Maintaining this profile could be the responsibility of the lead agency responsible for elder abuse in CALD communities (see Recommendation 5).

Recommendation 3

That further research into what constitutes elder abuse in CALD communities is undertaken.

Community Awareness and Education

Recommendation 4

That a culturally appropriate community education campaign which targets CALD seniors, CALD communities and service providers and which raises awareness of services available be developed and implemented.

Responsibility for Elder Abuse and CALD Seniors

Recommendation 5

That:

- a lead government agency be appointed to develop and coordinate a whole of government approach to the prevention and response to elder abuse, and a particular focus be given to addressing elder abuse in CALD communities; and
- partnerships be developed with agencies in the non-government sector to formulate local initiatives to combat elder abuse.

Recommendation 6

That a position be created and resourced in a government or non-government agency with responsibility for promoting the interests of CALD seniors and the prevention of elder abuse in CALD communities.

Recommendation 7

That this report be referred to the Western Australian Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (APEA: WA) for its endorsement and support in implementing the report's recommendations. Implementation of these recommendations should be in consultation with the Alliance.

Recommendation 8

That continued evaluation, monitoring and accountability is required in order to address positive outcomes for Western Australian CALD communities in identifying, responding to and addressing the issues of elder abuse.

CALD Service Providers

Recommendation 9

That:

- CALD services and ethnic community workers are adequately resourced and trained to raise awareness and respond to elder abuse in their communities;
- a casual pool of trained CALD workers, from across the different CALD communities be established to work specifically in the area of elder abuse; and
- the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing expand funding for programs (such as the Community Partnerships Program) able to assist with preventing and responding to elder abuse in CALD communities by improving links between CALD and mainstream agencies and access for CALD seniors to aged care services.

Cross Cultural Training

Recommendation 10

That service providers and policy makers, particularly those working in the aged care and family/domestic violence areas, receive cross-cultural training, training about the CALD sector and training about issues for CALD seniors and communities.

A Helpline

Recommendation 11

That a telephone hotline/helpline service providing readily accessible assistance to seniors who wish to discuss concerns about elder abuse be made available. Interpreter services will need to be readily available to the hotline to ensure that CALD seniors who have difficulty with English can access the service.

Social Activities and Programs

Recommendation 12

That resources be allocated to increase the number of social activities and programs available to CALD seniors to prevent social isolation and reduce the risk of elder abuse.

Assistance for Migrating Seniors

Recommendation 13

That the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) provide more information and assistance to parents coming to Australia to join their children. This information could include the kinds of problems they may encounter and, in particular, make them aware of the need to clarify expectations and have clear agreements on matters related to their support once in Australia.

Welfare and Safety Checks

Recommendation 14

That further consideration be given to the appropriateness and viability of developing services to provide safety and welfare checks for frail seniors.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Western Australian Government's Active Ageing Strategy (2004) allocated project funding to the Public Advocate to work with people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to identify and develop local responses to the abuse of older people. This project funding was supplemented by the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering (OSIV) so that the project could raise awareness of the issue of elder abuse with a larger number of individuals and organisations in CALD communities.

1.1 Background to the Project

The Public Advocate is the independent statutory officer appointed under the *Guardianship and Administration Act (1990)* to promote and protect the rights, dignity and autonomy of people with decision-making disabilities in Western Australia and to reduce their risk of neglect, exploitation and abuse.

Abuse of older people is a largely hidden issue and there is a need to make the community more aware about how and why it occurs and who is at risk. The Public Advocate is particularly concerned about the impact of abuse on older people with decision-making disabilities. Research shows that this group of older people is particularly vulnerable. The report, *Elder Abuse in Western Australia* (November, 2002), completed by Curtin University's Freemasons Centre for Research into Aged Care and commissioned by the OSIV indicated that 75% of people aged 65 and older who experienced abuse had a decision-making disability (i.e. dementia, intellectual disability, mental illness or acquired brain injury).

The methodology used in the Curtin study involved surveying general practitioners and other service providers. The study was not designed with people from CALD backgrounds in mind and did not specifically explore elder abuse in these communities.

Advocare Incorporated is a not-for-profit organisation supporting the rights of older people and people with disabilities. Advocare has funding to provide an Elder Abuse Prevention program. The organisation conducted a state-wide *Speak Out Survey "SOS" on Elder Abuse* (April 2003) which found some evidence of elder abuse within CALD communities. However, few older adults from a CALD background responded to the survey and the report indicates that this may be related to cultural beliefs about non-disclosure of private matters (p42).

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (Australian Social Trends 2002, Population – Population Composition: Older Overseas Born Australians), overseas born people represented one-third of the Australian population aged 65 and over in the year 2000. This age group has increased dramatically in recent years and is projected to grow more rapidly through the coming decades. In Western Australia, the percentage of people aged 65 and over who were born overseas is greater than the Australian average (12% overseas born in WA compared to 7% overseas born Australia wide). People born overseas are a diverse demographic and some require special consideration in terms of policy

development, planning and service delivery particularly as they move into the older age groups.

The Public Advocate is concerned about the impact of abuse on older people with decision-making disabilities. Initial consultation into elder abuse in CALD communities indicates that there are instances of abuse. Those consulted said that this mistreatment was not acceptable. However, an understanding of what constitutes abuse of older people from a CALD perspective has not been fully explored.

2. OVERVIEW OF ELDER ABUSE

2.1 What is elder abuse?

In much the same way as domestic violence was a hidden issue a generation ago, elder abuse is largely a hidden problem and little is known about its prevalence and its manifestations. Information about elder abuse has begun to emerge in recent years and the issue is becoming prominent on the social agenda of governments.

A United Nations International Plan of Action on elder abuse was adopted in April 2002 and on 17 November 2002 an expert meeting devised the *Toronto Declaration on Global Prevention of Elder Abuse* (World Health Organization (WHO) and International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) (2002). This declaration defines elder abuse as:

“...A single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within a relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person”. It can be of various forms: physical psychological/emotional, sexual, financial or simply reflect intentional or unintentional neglect.”

In Australia, the Australian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (ANPEA) defines elder abuse as:

“Any act occurring within a relationship where there is an implication of trust, which results in harm to an older person. Abuse can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological, social and/or neglect.”
(ANPEA, 1999)

To present information to CALD elders in a simple and clear manner, the following definitions were adopted for this research. They were adapted from definitions used by Advocare (2002, Fact Sheet for Older Adults – *Prevent Elder Abuse Happening to You*).

The project’s Reference Group decided it might facilitate acceptance of the information, if the category of sexual abuse was subsumed into the physical abuse category.

Elder abuse is when older people are harmed by people they trust such as members of their family or friends.

Elder abuse can be:

- Financial
- Physical
- Psychological
- Social
- Neglect

Financial Abuse

Using an older person's money or property without their permission or through trickery by, for example, taking the person's pension money or savings; taking, selling, pawning or giving away their possessions; or selling or giving away their house.

Physical Abuse

Pushing, slapping or hitting an older person; screaming, throwing things or perpetration of other sorts of violence; restraining a person, locking them up, tying them up; sexual abuse, including sexual harassment or pressure, forcing someone to have sex, interfering sexually with an older person.

Psychological Abuse

Abuse involving threats of punishment or abandonment; threats to harm others; general intimidation; making someone fearful or withdrawing of care and support.

Social Abuse

Restricting social freedom by isolating the person from family, friends or service providers; telling them who they can or cannot see; telling them what they can or cannot do; stopping the person from doing things they enjoyed.

Neglect

Purposely or inadvertently failing to provide food, shelter, care, emotional support or failing to allow others to provide these things for an older person.

2.2 What do we know about elder abuse?

The Curtin University report, *Elder Abuse in Western Australia* (Boldy, Webb, Horner, Davey, and Kingsley; 2002) estimated the incidence of elder abuse to be under one per cent based on surveys of people aged 60 and over. However, the report attributed this figure to under-reporting. It indicated that respondents were uncertain about the actual prevalence of abuse with most of them estimating it to

be under five per cent while others estimated it to be as much as 15%. Kinnear and Graycar (1999) also identified a figure of under five per cent as an estimate of the prevalence of elder abuse, a figure which concurs with overseas estimates.

The Curtin University study indicated that:

- women were abused at two and half times the rate of men (p17);
- the most common form of reported or suspected abuse was financial abuse (81%) followed by psychological and physical abuse (p18);
- very few cases of sexual abuse were identified;
- it was not uncommon for more than one type of abuse to occur together;
- the people most likely to commit elder abuse were found to be the older person's adult daughter or son (43%); and
- eighteen per cent of abuse was reported to be committed by a spouse or de facto partner (p19).

The Curtin study indicated that abuse of CALD seniors had not been specifically explored and recommended that these issues be further explored (p27).

Advocare's *Speak Out Survey "SOS" on Elder Abuse* (Faye and Sellick, 2003) found that two-thirds of the victims of abuse were women (p16). The mean age of victims was 72 years but the most common age of victims was 78 years (p17).

Other findings of the Advocare survey are as follows:

- It is equally likely for perpetrators to be male or female.
- Alleged perpetrators were on average 49 years of age while the most common age of alleged perpetrators was 60 years.
- Like the Curtin study, they found that the most common relationship between the person being abused and the perpetrator was that of parent and adult son or daughter.
- Daughters-in-law, sons-in-law and friends were the least likely perpetrators of abuse.
- The vast majority of victims of elder abuse (90%) lived in their own home (either as an owner or the person who paid the rent) and in 31% of the cases the alleged perpetrator lived in the victim's home with a third of these receiving the carers' payment.
- In only three cases (three per cent of those surveyed) the victim lived in the home of the alleged perpetrator.
- In six per cent of cases the abuse occurred while the victim was living in a nursing home.
- Around two thirds of the cases identified by the research related to financial abuse and more than 80% of those cases also involved psychological abuse.

- Twenty per cent of cases reported involved physical abuse and another 20% involved social abuse.
- Only two cases reported as part of this study involved people from a CALD background.

The findings of *Missing Voices: Views Of Older Persons On Elder Abuse* (WHO and INPEA, 2002) are of particular interest. The study had a cross-cultural component. It was conducted in eight countries, five being developing countries. These were Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, India, Kenya, Lebanon and Sweden. It involved focus groups with older people and with primary health care workers. The study sought to elicit the older person's own views and perceptions on elder abuse. It defined elders as people aged 60 and over.

The following categories of abuse emerged from the *Missing Voices* study:

- Structural and societal abuse;
- Neglect and abandonment;
- Disrespect and ageist attitudes;
- Psychological, emotional and verbal abuse;
- Physical abuse; and
- Legal and financial abuse.

The international study established that elder abuse was a difficult topic to raise with seniors and discussions often resulted in discomfort and denial. Physical abuse and sexual/spousal abuse were not regarded as being of major concern to participants. Psychological, emotional and verbal abuse were the forms of abuse most frequently raised as being perpetrated within families and in society (disrespect and ageist attitudes and structural and societal abuse respectively). Women and the poor were found to be most susceptible to elder abuse although there was recognition that abuse occurred across all socio-economic groups.

A wide range of issues was included in structural and societal abuse, which was found to be more pronounced in developing countries. This category encompasses issues such as income security and accommodation as well as budget cuts, wrong priorities in public spending, cutbacks in health care and insufficient supervision of health care institutions. In terms of accommodation, people expressed a desire to live in their own home and the cases of abuse mentioned in this category involved seniors having to share their home with adult children. The problem of adult children living with their parents was worse for lower income families because lodgings were smaller (pp10-11). Changes in social roles, with all adults in the household having to work and no capacity left for care-giving, were blamed for emotional abuse, physical neglect and even physical abuse (p11).

A major theme emerging from the study was that disrespect was seen as the most distressing form of mistreatment identified by seniors in all countries (p13).

Disrespect was linked to verbal, emotional, physical abuse and neglect. Westernisation was blamed by some as the source of new attitudes and values.

The project officer could not locate specific research from other States and Territories in Australia relating to elder abuse in CALD communities. However, the report *Attitudes to Domestic and Family Violence in the Diverse Australian Community: Cultural Perspectives* (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2000) provides information on attitudes to violence, barriers to disclosure, perceived options for victims and appropriate communication strategies to combat a problem with significant parallels to elder abuse. A key finding of that project is that awareness raising should be based on positive messages.

It found that specifically designed awareness raising activities, developed in consultation with the CALD community were needed, rather than a direct translation of an existing mainstream campaign (p45).

Service models used in the domestic violence, women's health and children's services areas are relevant to elder abuse in CALD communities. These models involve the use of a casual pool of trained workers who can be engaged on a case-by-case basis to provide services to individuals and/or for awareness raising. To work with CALD seniors who may be experiencing or at risk of elder abuse, these workers would need to have an understanding of cultural issues, be from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds with language skills and be trained in the recognition and prevention of elder abuse.

3. THE RESEARCH PROJECT

3.1 Scope of Project

The project aimed to explore the issue of elder abuse within a range of CALD communities. The focus of the research was on seniors from a CALD background.

Seniors were defined as people aged 60 years and over. This is consistent with the definition of seniors used by the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering (OSIV) and with the cut off age for seniors used in both the *Elder Abuse in Western Australia* study (Boldy, et al, 2002) and in the *Speak Out Survey "SOS" on Elder Abuse* (Faye and Sellick, 2003).

For the purpose of this project, CALD people were defined as those people born overseas, in countries other than those classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as "main English speaking countries". The set of main English speaking countries other than Australia used by the ABS comprises: Canada, the Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland) and the United States of America (ABS, May 2004).

According to the ABS:

“The list of main English speaking countries...is not an attempt to classify countries on the basis of whether or not English is the predominant or official language of each country. It is a list of the main countries from which Australia receives, or has received, significant numbers of overseas settlers who are likely to speak English. The list therefore includes South Africa. Although large numbers of South Africans do not speak English as their first language, those who migrate to Australia are likely to speak English. The list does not include country units which are statistically insignificant in the Australian context, although they are English speaking countries.”¹

3.2 Project Objectives

The objectives of the project were to:

- identify whether elder abuse is an issue in CALD communities;
- begin to develop an understanding of what constitutes elder abuse in CALD communities and identify any unique issues for these communities and/or particular cultural and linguistic groups;
- gather the views of CALD people on how best to identify and respond to elder abuse when it occurs;
- identify appropriate ways to raise awareness of the issue of elder abuse in CALD communities; and
- identify priorities and strategies to further address the issue in the future.

3.3 Research Process

The project was conducted in the period between May and December 2005 by a project officer with extensive experience working with CALD communities.

3.3.1 Project Reference Group

A Reference Group made up of representatives from key government agencies and the CALD communities, provided advice on the development, progress and report of this project.

¹ Source:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/1020492cfd63696ca2568a1002477b5/40efda6fb79e5ccdca256e97007a7623>

The members of the Reference Group were:

Ms Michelle Scott, Public Advocate (Chair);

Mr Stephen Boylen, Director, Planning, Policy and Research, Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering, Department for Community Development;

Ms Ann Aly, Senior Policy Officer, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Multicultural Interests;

Mrs Olga Ramasamy, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Asian Association of WA (Inc);

Ms Sarina Sirna, Managing Director, Italo-Australian Welfare and Cultural Centre Inc.;

Ms Theresa Kwok, Manager Welfare and Community Services, The Chung Wah Association;

Ms Diana Popovich, President, Serbo Australian Information and Welfare Centre Inc (for part of the project);

Ms Beata Sklodowski, Community Partnerships Officer, Umbrella Multicultural Community Care Services Inc (for part of the project); and

Ms Paula Cristoffanini, Project Officer, Office of the Public Advocate.

The terms of reference for the Reference Group are attached at Appendix A.

3.3.2 Development of the Research Methodology

The research methodology for the project was developed at the start of the project in consultation with key community organisations that provide services to CALD seniors. The Public Advocate, in consultation with the Office of Multicultural Interests, had identified key organisations to be consulted in this phase of the project. A list of these organisations is in Appendix B.

These initial consultations were aimed at:

- informing relevant organisations, service providers and community members about the CALD Elder Abuse Project;
- obtaining information about elder abuse within CALD communities;
- obtaining suggestions about a suitable methodology for the project;
- obtaining the support of relevant organisations for the project; and
- identifying community representatives for the project's Reference Group.

All those consulted acknowledged the difficulty in obtaining information on the highly sensitive topic of elder abuse. Awareness raising was seen as an imperative first step in any consultation on elder abuse as demonstrated by the following comments.

“...People are often not aware they were being ‘abused’. They may speak of having a particular problem...”

Those consulted confirmed the project officer’s concern that it would not be possible to obtain quantitative information. None of those consulted was able to provide information as to the incidence of elder abuse within CALD communities.

“We know as much as you know...”

Those consulted warned of the need to be mindful of and reassuring about confidentiality and to present results “globally” to ensure confidentiality. Reporting by community was not considered appropriate because of the relatively small size of the population of seniors in some communities and the risk that individuals could be identified. In addition, there was a need to avoid any perception that by participating in the research, contributing communities were branded as perpetrators of elder abuse.

It was suggested that CALD seniors be consulted in small forums, at community centres. These consultations would need to be conducted by the project officer with a co-facilitator, a person known and trusted by the seniors and someone who would be able to speak to them in their own language.

Many of those consulted reinforced the need for informality and use of scenarios to explain concepts. They also recommended that definitions and questions be kept simple and to a minimum. Also, providing an option for people to remain anonymous by telephoning the researcher (through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) if needed) was offered to ensure that those who did not feel comfortable raising matters in a forum could do so by other means.

A common comment was the need to work within a framework that empowered CALD seniors and encouraged them to “stand up for themselves”.

People providing services to CALD seniors were seen as a key target group for the research. A number of those consulted mentioned the need to raise awareness of elder abuse and existing strategies and services with these providers.

3.3.3 The Research Methodology

It was recognised that the study would be essentially qualitative seeking the views and opinions of seniors and service providers. However, an analysis of information from the ABS 2001 Population Census and information provided by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) was completed as a means of developing a profile of the population of CALD seniors in WA. This analysis is contained in Appendix F.

A two pronged methodology was devised to target both CALD seniors and service providers. It was also decided to frame the project within the context of a

“Care and Respect for Seniors” campaign. It was thought that introducing a discussion on elder abuse, without a context, may be too confronting. Presentations and information materials emphasised the fact that “every person, no matter how old, has the right to be treated with dignity and respect”.

Consultation with CALD Seniors

Two strategies were identified to reach CALD seniors. These included consultations with CALD seniors through forums and by telephone where callers could discuss elder abuse privately and anonymously if they wished and, if necessary, with the assistance of a telephone interpreter.

The forums were generally conducted in the seniors’ own language, using facilitators. The facilitators were identified by the community organisations which organised each of the forums. These organisations received a small honorarium to cover the costs of organising the forums and any out of pocket expenses. The facilitators were people known to the seniors through their roles as service providers. They received training on the presentation, and were provided with a copy of the elder abuse brochure in their own language prior to the forum to familiarise them with the definitions and terminology used.

Consultations with CALD Service Providers

Consultations with service providers were conducted in two stages. As mentioned previously, there were the initial consultations with key organisations who work with CALD seniors which focused on development of the research methodology.

The second stage of the service provider consultation consisted of a service providers’ forum and one-on-one interviews with staff of multicultural day centres or day centres in local government areas with a large proportion of CALD seniors. A list of the service providers interviewed is contained at Appendix C.

During the initial consultations, the Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia (ECCWA) and the WA Police indicated that they would be conducting forums to raise awareness about elder abuse with CALD seniors during the life of the project. They had received funding from the Office of Crime Prevention, the Office of Multicultural Interests and OSIV to produce multilingual, audiovisual materials on elder abuse and to conduct awareness raising activities including forums and a campaign in the ethnic media before the end of 2005.

As the ECCWA/Police project and this research project both involved raising awareness about elder abuse with CALD seniors, a decision was made to share the responsibility for the forums. By coming together it was hoped to extend the number of forums and hence the communities covered.

Unfortunately, the joint work was limited because by the conclusion of this project, ECCWA was only able to organise one service providers’ forum. This forum was presented in English by the project officer for this project, Paula Cristoffanini. ECCWA covered the costs of this forum and reported on the

research questions pertaining to this project. Additionally, the WA Police produced a “wallet card” to complement the brochures produced as part of this project. The card contains the contact details of the Office of the Public Advocate, Advocare and the Police.

They were circulated among organisations serving CALD seniors. An example of this card is at Attachment J.

3.3.4 The Research Questions

All consultations were approached in much the same way. Participants were provided with an outline of the project, a definition of elder abuse and an explanation of the types of elder abuse that can occur and some elder abuse scenarios. The scenarios were developed from cases that emerged during the initial consultation phase and cases provided by staff of the Office of the Public Advocate. The cases were transformed into scenarios by generalising them in ways designed to prevent identification. In all, 10 scenarios were developed. Four of these were used for the presentations. The remainder were used to elucidate questions or illustrate a point in discussions. The scenarios are provided in Appendix D.

It was explained to participants that it was not the aim of the project to focus on any particular community and that, given the relatively small number of seniors in many CALD communities the results would be presented globally so as not to identify any particular cases.

Participants were then asked the following questions:

1. Is elder abuse, mistreatment, neglect a problem in your community/CALD communities?
2. What kinds of elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect are you aware of?
3. Who would know if someone was being abused, mistreated or neglected?
4. What can be done about elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect?
5. How should we raise awareness of elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect?

The questions were contained in an interview schedule developed for service providers and in a power point presentation used for the forum.

Copies of these documents are in Appendix E and Attachment H, respectively.

3.3.5 Resources Produced

In addition to the wallet card produced by the Police, the Office of the Public Advocate produced a brochure aimed at raising awareness of elder abuse. The brochure contains the definition of elder abuse used for this project, explains the various forms that abuse can take, and outlines strategies to prevent it. The brochure was produced in English, Italian, Greek, Dutch, Polish, Serbian,

Croatian, Chinese and Vietnamese. The English version of the brochure is at Attachment I.

A flyer was also developed by the Office of the Public Advocate. It was circulated to community groups, government and community agencies and service providers to inform them about the project and/or seek their assistance with promoting it. A copy of the flyer is contained at Appendix G.

3.3.6 Limitations of the Research

This project was exploratory rather than comprehensive. It was intended as an initial investigation to obtain information for future work. Its findings on elder abuse are qualitative and are based on anecdotal information from seniors and service providers consulted.

The funding available for the project was limited and allowed for employment of the project officer on a part time basis over a period of seven months. It was therefore able to reach a limited number of communities and a limited number of people within each community.

In addition, the consultations reached those communities with large numbers of seniors. These tend to include people who have been in Australia for some time. Seniors in smaller and newer communities were not well represented in the consultations. Attempts to consult people in a regional area were unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the project reached more than 200 CALD seniors, providing important information about the issue of elder abuse within this population.

The project focussed on consulting a limited number of professionals. Its aim was to target those professionals who specifically or primarily service CALD seniors to distinguish the issues affecting this population from those affecting mainstream seniors.

The statistical data used for this project was from the 2001 ABS Population Census. This project was conducted towards the end of the Census cycle, making the data somewhat dated. However, using data relating to people aged 60 and over at the time of the Census, a reasonable assessment can be made of people who would be age 65 and over at the time of this research. A recommendation of this project is to update the profile of CALD seniors in WA when the 2006 Census data becomes available.

Aside from the challenge of obtaining information on what can be a very private and difficult to discuss topic, this project also had to overcome the difficulties involved in accessing CALD service providers and seniors. The project relied on:

- information provided by the Office of Multicultural Interests;
- the experience and expertise of the project officer;
- the resource intensive, although fruitful, process of conducting an initial round of consultations to assist with developing the methodology; and
- on seeking other relevant contacts through the consultation process.

While the methodology worked fairly well in this project, it is a labour intensive method that may not be suitable in other contexts. It may be much easier in future to reach the appropriate informants and CALD seniors themselves via an agency position which specifically focuses on serving CALD seniors.

4. CONSULTATIONS WITH CALD SENIORS

4.1 Overview of Seniors' Consultations

A total of seven (7) forums with CALD seniors was conducted.

- Five of these were with seniors from specific ethnic/language groups - namely Italian, Chinese, Polish, Vietnamese, and Spanish speaking seniors.
- Two forums involved seniors from a mixture of backgrounds.
- The “Other Asian” forum mostly comprised seniors from South Asia and some from the Middle East.
- The Eastern European forum had seniors from a range of backgrounds including Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, German, Czech, Ukrainian, Slovakian, and Latvian. This forum also had four Australian seniors who work as volunteers with CALD seniors.

A total of 210 CALD people participated in these forums. The great majority of them were seniors older than 70 years of age. The table below indicates the number of seniors by gender participating in each of the forums.

Community	Female	Male	Total
Chinese	13	3	16
Eastern European	35	9	44
Italian	19	13	32
Other Asian	23	3	26
Polish	38	8	46
Spanish Speaking	21	3	24
Vietnamese	16	6	22
TOTAL	165	45	210

As previously indicated, most of the forums were conducted by facilitators who spoke the language of the particular group. One exception was the “Other Asian” forum which included people from Sri Lanka and the subcontinent. This forum was conducted in English by the coordinator of services as the facilitator with a volunteer who assisted with interpreting.

Two forums were conducted by the project officer. One was in Spanish (the project officer's first language); and the “Eastern European” forum was conducted in English with a Serbo/Croatian interpreter. The project officer was

present at all the forums. She noted the responses to the “Other Asian”, “Spanish speaking” and the “Italian” forums (Italian is the project officer’s second language). Reports on the remainder of the forums were provided to the project officer by scribes who were debriefed by the project officer immediately after the forums.

To have some input from a regional area, attempts were made to conduct a forum in Bunbury through the South West Migrant Service Inc. However, with no service provider with a particular focus on CALD seniors in the region, this proved too difficult to arrange.

At each of the forums, participants were told that the project officer was available for anonymous telephone consultations with CALD individuals who might wish to discuss concerns about elder abuse. They were advised that they could reach the project officer through the Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS) if required. No person made contact through this method.

However, on four occasions, CALD seniors approached the project officer privately at the forums with concerns about elder abuse. One concern related to an episode in the relatively recent past involving an abuser who has since died. Two others were referred to OPA as their reports involved people who seemed to lack capacity and the fourth was referred to Advocare Inc.’s Abuse Prevention Program. Three of these cases involved allegations of financial abuse. In one case neglect was also alleged, while two had a psychological abuse component. One case involved physical and psychological abuse.

4.2 Findings from the Consultations with Seniors

A summary of the views expressed by CALD seniors during the forums is provided below.

4.2.1 Responses relating to Question 1

Is elder abuse, mistreatment, neglect a problem in your community/CALD communities?

All the seniors participating in the forums were aware of instances of elder abuse within their communities. Initially, they indicated they did not know of any cases of abuse but as discussions progressed and the types of elder abuse were explained, they all said they knew of cases.

As in previous research, participants indicated that the main abusers were adult sons, daughters or spouses.

“...I hear of lots of cases like that, not in my home but in the case of friends I hear things like that all the time.”

“... My father who is in his 90s has had problems with my sister...”

“...Most of the people don't want to accept that they are being abused – they treat it as a normal thing...traditionally they cover up...”

Seniors from communities who have been in Australia for less time thought that elder abuse was more widespread than seniors from more established communities. In one forum a view was expressed that abuse was more likely in financially poorer families.

Seniors were keen to assist with information and often resorted to humour in response to their discomfort with the topic.

Seniors from all communities spoke about a culture of secrecy that needs to be broken to prevent/provide assistance in cases of elder abuse.

“I did not want all these people [the community] to know but I should have said something.”

“...For the community it is always what other people think. It is not what one thinks but what will my friends think. There is a need to break the stigma.”

“...It is there but we do not bring it out. You do not want to shame your loved ones by bringing it out.”

“...People do not want to talk about this because it is below them but it is important to talk to someone who can help you...”

“...Every one has little problems, within families it is difficult to let others into our business...” and “...it is a family matter...”

“...Elder abuse does exist. We need to get it into our heads that we have to report it. Especially people do not want to wash their dirty linen in public, they keep it secret.”

4.2.2 Responses relating to Question 2

What kinds of elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect are you aware of?

The most frequent type of elder abuse reported at the forums was financial abuse. A belief that the assets accumulated by the older person(s) in their lifetime belonged to their children was frequently raised.

“...It does not matter if children take the money as it will go to them anyway...”

Jealousy and the unequal treatment of children was viewed by participants in one of the forums as a source of financial abuse. Equal division of assets was seen as a way to avoid these problems.

Some of the cases/comments relating to financial abuse raised in the forums included:

“It is most popular that parents put money into children’s name and children keep the bankbook and after a few years when problems develop the child returns the bankbook but there is no money.”

“Very usual to have problems because parents come with sponsorship and before they come over they sell their property and send money to their children in Australia and then they cannot get money back. In [country] they cannot take money out of the country so they transfer it through the black market/use an agent and have no proof of the money.”

“Tradition is very important in our community. A high proportion of children take [their parents’] pension money because of the concept of pooling together of resources – in the [country] community we stick together – at the beginning [seniors from this community] put all the pension to pay children’s houses thinking that they will get something back in the end but not so.”

“I know of a woman who went to hospital and gave authority to her children to take money out from the bank – they took thousands of dollars without accounting to her and when she came out of hospital she cancelled their authority to operate her account.”

“A lady sold her home and distributed the money among her children then went to live with one daughter but was not well treated because she did not have any money and the daughter had to pay for things. Now she is in a home and they have better communication. She should not have distributed her money so soon...”

“A couple I know came to Australia to be with their son who controls their pension. The son convinced them to put their house in [country] into his name and he sold it. Now the lady has bad Alzheimer’s and is in a home. The father lives in Homeswest accommodation. The son washed his hands of them.”

“...there is a problem with Powers of Attorney...”

The other categories of abuse mentioned were psychological, social and neglect. Seniors commented that these kinds of abuse are not “so obvious” and they were not sure when and if this amounted to mistreatment. It appeared that they found it easier to understand and classify those cases where the abuse was concrete, as in the case of financial abuse, rather than more abstract.

There was no knowledge or mention of physical abuse in the forums. Except for the one case raised in private with the project officer after a forum. The response to the scenario involving physical abuse at the forums was unanimously negative and it was clearly recognised as abuse and as cruel. Some of the seniors expressed disbelief that physical abuse could occur. In one forum, seniors commented that locking someone up should be against the law and the family should be prosecuted.

An issue raised in the forums was that of a perceived over-reliance by CALD families on elderly parents/relatives to assist with domestic chores and the care of children.

A case, which was similar to one of the cases mentioned in *the Missing Voices* report, of a lady who is now deceased was mentioned in one of the forums. The case appeared to be well known in the community and involved a pensioner whose children were putting together a deposit for a house. They asked the pensioner to borrow against her credit card and move in with them.

“The lady had not expected ownership but she did expect compassion.. Instead, she was relegated to her bedroom. She could not cook what and when she wanted, could not make noise or watch what she wanted on the television. Eventually the family ‘threw her out’.”

In one forum seniors expressed concern about abuse in nursing homes. As this related to service providers, they were directed to Advocare for advice. Below are some other cases raised.

“I know a lady in her 80s who is being abused. She is all alone, socially isolated, she speaks [language]. A lady takes her shopping but shops also for herself on the lady’s account and her children hardly go to visit her. She is scared of saying anything.”

“An elderly 80 year old got one bowl of rice to eat all day while family was away at work from morning till night.”

“...the husband is sick in hospital and the wife wants to visit him but no one in the family wants to take her to visit the husband and carer has to do it.”

“I know of a lady who does not get on well with her daughter in law. She is malnourished – she saves money to send to her other children in [country].”

“...there is a lady who has two sons and needed clothes, no one takes her shopping and she was wearing rags. She had been unable to seek help because of her lack of English.”

Neglect was often seen to be unintentional or based on misconceptions.

“...in one case a son wants mother to have more exercise. He will not concede she has Parkinson’s...”

“Mum is ready to go into nursing home the family [would] rather keeping her at home than get all the help available because of misconceptions.”

The issue of “Westernisation” of younger family members as discussed in the *Missing Voices* report was implied in many of the comments made at the forums. People spoke of a loss of tradition and lack of respect but were understanding of the pressures on the younger generations. Below are some of the comments made in this context:

“These problems occur because today’s youth know everything and need no one, they are very determined.”

“Youth must think of this but they have their own road to walk and have not got the time.”

“People in Australia are very stressed...”

4.2.3 Responses relating to Question 3

Who would know if someone was being abused, mistreated or neglected?

Some seniors indicated that they would rather deny abuse than tell anyone. Concerns about shame and possible retribution were frequently mentioned as reasons for not reporting abuse.

“It would be such a shame if anything happen to me that I would not tell anybody.”

“In [community] everybody is loved and well treated by their beloved.”

“Many times they have fear of confiding - they are closed, they are ashamed...”

“Only the abused person knows – or their husband or children...”

“If you cannot trust your own children how could you trust someone else...”

“Seniors would not say anything because the community is very small and they could be penalised by the family.”

“Their son or daughter would know if they were to tell anybody and it would cause more abuse.”

“Difficult because people do not want to report [abuse] because they do not want it going back to the family.”

Language barriers and the isolation of people who do not speak English were also raised as obstacles to disclosure. The seniors said they would prefer to take their concerns to CALD organisations for assistance or to help them in dealing with mainstream organisations.

“I will not contact Advocare or the Office or the Public Advocate but would go through the [service organisation].”

“I would go through [service organisation] but mainstream is too hard. I have [worker’s name]’s mobile number.”

“If there is a case it is better to have an agent like the [service organisation] as the middle man...”

“If I have problems I ring the [service organisation].”

“...we could ring [coordinator of service].”

Care workers emerged as the one group of people who are potentially able to identify abuse or in whom seniors might confide.

“Carers [care worker] can be in close contact with the older person and can see what is happening, can also see a person who is not happy.”

In one of the forums seniors indicated that in their country of origin, there were people who checked on the elderly about once a month. Social workers were identified as being a resource for seniors to discuss concerns about abuse although forum participants were not able to explain how they would contact a social worker. They seemed to assume that they would be able to contact a social worker through ethnic community organisations.

“In [country] there are people who are able to make the peace in a family when problems arise. Not the police, a social worker.”

“...I would go to a social worker.”

The benefit of having a “hotline” for elder abuse was mentioned at several of the forums. A number of seniors referred to the existence of hotlines for children and suggested there is a need for a similar hotline for seniors. CALD seniors were not sure of the role of Advocare or OPA and wanted to know more about what would happen if they were to call these organisations. The Wallet Cards were seen as positive – “Every one should have one,” was said on a number of occasions but there was concern expressed as to which organisation to contact.

CALD seniors expressed a widespread reluctance to go to the Police. Their main concern was not to get their family members into trouble.

Priests and doctors were mentioned by Italian seniors as people that seniors could confide in. Doctors were mentioned as one professional group who could be in a position to advocate on behalf of the senior in family matters.

The need for confidentiality was often mentioned by seniors as a prerequisite for disclosure.

4.2.4 Responses relating to Question 4

What can be done about elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect?

Raising awareness of elder abuse in a range of languages emerged as the principal strategy to prevent or alleviate abuse.

Seniors were concerned that the people who needed information about elder abuse were unable to attend the forums. However, they still regarded the forums as positive because participants would be able to tell others who may be having problems. Two seniors holding positions of leadership in their own communities said that, as a result of the forums, they would be passing on information about and be more alert to elder abuse. One of these seniors indicated a willingness to organise an information session for his walking group. Another said:

“We should be like Jehovah’s witnesses and spread the word.”

Maintaining seniors’ involvement in the community was seen as important. CALD seniors remarked about the particular level of isolation of some seniors who are unable to go out, have lost their independence and do not speak English. Groups and activities for these seniors were seen as a way of helping them maintain independence, self esteem and enjoyment of life and as a step towards preventing elder abuse.

“Checking on people” or on the welfare of vulnerable seniors was mentioned on a number of occasions. Some seniors expressed the view that all seniors cared for by family members should be checked upon. This checking should be done by

someone who speaks the person's language and a system such as that operated by agencies like Silver Chain, who check on people with ongoing health problems, could be implemented. Additionally, seniors were of the view that people receiving a carer payment should be checked at random.

Seniors at one forum suggested that financial assistance and help with finding alternative accommodation were services which were needed to assist seniors caught up in abuse.

Some seniors warned that sometimes it was best not to rush to intervene as some situations 'right' themselves. There was also a comment that seniors sometimes seek help with situations and then refuse to accept help that is offered. Other seniors were concerned that in some cases seniors were abusing their adult families. In more than one forum, seniors raised the possibility that people with dementia could make false allegations of abuse.

4.2.5 Responses relating to Question 5

How should we raise awareness of elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect?

The need for a campaign on elder abuse was identified in all the forums. Everyone agreed that there was a need for more information on this issue and on the services available. A campaign was also seen as a positive means of preventing abuse in that adult children/spouses would be warned about abusing their parents/spouses.

Ethnic radio and television were viewed as the most appropriate mediums for a campaign. Most seniors indicated that they listened to ethnic radio and television, particularly the news. They suggested that people from their community appeared on radio to discuss elder abuse. Newspapers and newsletters were also mentioned. People appreciated the translated brochure and indicated that any campaign would need to provide information in a range of languages.

5. CONSULTATIONS WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS

5.1 Overview of Consultations with CALD Service Providers

As indicated above, there were a number of consultations with service providers. There was also a presentation on the project to a network coordinated by the Multicultural Aged Care Service of WA (MACSWA). MACSWA assists providers of aged care services to provide appropriate services to CALD elders in Western Australia. The aim of the presentation was to alert providers to the project and to encourage them to participate if relevant.

5.2 Findings from Stage One Consultations with Service Providers

Eleven organisations were consulted in the initial consultation phase. The list of organisations consulted is at Appendix B.

While they were unable to estimate the incidence, all of the organisations consulted were aware of cases of elder abuse within the communities they service.

Consistent with information already available, financial and psychological abuse were identified as being more common than physical or other types of abuse. A common comment was that CALD seniors were not aware of what constituted elder abuse and that CALD people were reluctant to speak out for fear of shame or “loss of face”. As well, there was a preference to sort out problems within the family. Some cultural groups were noted as being particularly suspicious of the Police and other government workers.

In general, those consulted said elders, especially those who did not speak English, are not familiar with services (e.g. banking) and/or are not entitled to government services (eg: Centrelink or Medicare) because of their visa status. They rely heavily on others for their care and support. This lack of independence can make some CALD seniors vulnerable to abuse and means they see few ways out of the situation.

Also identified was the cultural norm of Asian women relying on male members of the family (father, husband, and son). There are particular obligations that result from this norm including that a mother lives with her oldest son and that she transfers her assets to this son. One community worker commented that members of her community were less vulnerable to financial abuse as they were “strong in respect of their property/assets”.

“I know of a grandmother whose grandchild is demanding money for a car. She would rather give the money than get continual demands/visits from the grandchild.”

“I am mostly aware of financial abuse involving Powers of Attorney and children taking their parents pension.”

“I know of people being visited in nursing homes and forced to sign wills/change wills.”

“CALD seniors are at times fooled by their children into passing on their home or business with stories that otherwise the government will take them by way of taxes/death duties.”

“One case involved a couple in their 80s where the wife took care of things. After the death of the wife, the husband did not know what to do. Nieces and nephews started coming to him suggesting he move in with them and sign over his home; asking him for the cheque books. He was concerned but did not know who to turn to.”

“A lady from [country] after husband died was asked by son to go and live with him in a granny flat at his home. He said that it would be hers for life. She sold her house and put money in the granny flat. Five years on and the son is moving up in life. He has bought a new house and has asked his mother to come with his family but she has had no say in the decision and she stands to lose her independence because she will no longer have her own place. They want to make everything beautiful and she will lose her freedom to do as she likes in her space.”

“Some CALD elders do not know they are being abused and feel that the behaviour they are experiencing is the norm. ...Many are under the false belief that they ‘owe’ their children.”

“In the case of pensioners, it is common for children to control the pension payments. Ninety to 95% of elders do not speak English nor do they understand banking and hence leave banking to the discretion of their children, which can result in lack of control of their funds. Sometimes children will say their mother does not need the program which costs only a few dollars yet they would have been happy for her to have access to the service if it was free. They say that they cannot afford the service if there is a charge.”

“If the older person is disabled a carer may control the finances of the disabled person.”

“In some communities, especially in the more recently arrived, older women may need to cook and look after the children and the whole family. In some cases the person wants to do this and sees him or herself as contributing to the welfare of three generations. However, in some cases, they may perform the chores but are not happy.”

“There are quite a few cases involving children who have sponsored their parents and, after falling out, had them thrown out of their home. These people may have sold their property in their country of origin and have nothing to fall back on and no access to social security.”

“A lady told me that in [her country] all the family had lived together, mother, children and grandchildren but, it was her home. In Australia she feels she does not have any rights at home and cannot even tell the grandchildren to turn music down.”

“Another source of abuse is that of expecting seniors to do baby sitting and housework. Many people sponsored parents with a view to them staying at home to look after the children so that they may go to work. However, parents think they are coming to a better life and find they have to fend for themselves and are poverty stricken, as children do not want to look after them.”

“Sometimes children may decide that the parent needs to go to a home and the parent does not know the options available.”

“There is a family where the parents and the in-laws live with their adult children. The husband’s parents get everything but the wife’s parents get very little. The husband’s parents go on trips. The wife’s parents hardly get out and are very unhappy but would not dare say anything for fear their daughter will pay the price if they complain.”

The existence of a ‘cultural divide’ between the older and younger generations in CALD communities was noted as a particular issue. There are different expectations across generations, with the elders retaining their cultural views while their children and grandchildren have become acculturated to Australian norms. In some forums, participants mentioned that some CALD seniors have unrealistic expectations of younger generations.

5.3 Stage Two Service Providers Consultations

5.3.1 Service Provider Forum

This forum was not as well attended as was hoped, with only 12 participants. It was nonetheless an important strategy as it accessed service providers who do not work specifically with, but may come across CALD seniors. This group would not have otherwise participated in the project’s consultations which focussed on providers working specifically with CALD seniors.

This group agreed that elder abuse is an issue in CALD communities. It also agreed that people were not aware of what constituted elder abuse. This was identified as an obstacle to disclosure.

The types of abuse identified included financial abuse and control of finances, making parents look after grandchildren without having time for themselves and social isolation.

Participants commented on the difficulties seniors face in disclosing elder abuse for fear of a breakdown in family relationships. If older people were to disclose abuse, they would open up only to people they trust. Forum participants felt that seniors might ring the OPA Telephone Advisory Service if they were aware of it.

Awareness raising was seen as a most important strategy to address or prevent elder abuse so that seniors realised what constituted elder abuse and reported it. The possibility of having a “no name conversation” was also suggested. Educating service providers to identify abuse, was also seen as important. The forum indicated that there was a need for a high level of professionalism and for information to be available in different languages. Other strategies mentioned were cross-cultural intergenerational counselling, a compulsory register of Enduring Powers of Attorney and a register of “significant others” in an older person’s life. Further research was also highlighted at this forum.

Suggested strategies for raising awareness included more workshops for providers and information for seniors. The “word of mouth” effect was considered an important information dissemination strategy. It was suggested a “train the trainer” program for migrant services’ workers would promote awareness and help with identification and reporting of elder abuse. The consensus was that awareness raising strategies should also include families so that they understand the consequences of elder abuse.

One concern expressed at the forum was the ubiquitous problem of reaching those people who do not frequent clubs or associations. It was agreed that seniors who are more isolated were at a greater risk. In this context, the forum noted the need for an up to date statistical profile of CALD seniors so that participation could be checked against this profile.

5.3.2 Interviews with Day Centre Service Providers

Consultations were held with the staff of nine Day Centres/providers who service solely or largely CALD seniors. One service provider was a social worker employed by a local government area that does not have day centres and instead refers clients to centres run by other providers. Services in seven local government areas participated. A list of those consulted is in Appendix C.

A standard interview schedule, containing the same research questions put to CALD seniors, was developed for the purpose of consulting with relevant service providers (see Appendix E). The consultations were conducted as one-on-one interviews.

The services consulted provided services to clients of the following origin.

Austrian	Italian
Bosnian	Lithuanian
Burmese	Macedonian
Chinese	Other Asian
Croatian	Polish
Dutch	Portuguese
German	Russian
Greek	Spanish speaking
Indian	Vietnamese

All service providers indicated that they serviced clients of Italian origin, which were often their largest client group. Two service providers worked solely with members of the Italian community.

Two of the service providers consulted worked in dementia-specific services. The remainder either had a mix of competent clients and clients with dementia or were mainly services for competent clients but would accept CALD people with mild dementia.

5.3.3 Findings from Stage Two Service Provider Consultations

5.3.3.1 Responses relating to Question 1

Is elder abuse, mistreatment, neglect a problem in your community/CALD communities?

All service providers indicated that they were aware of cases of elder abuse among their CALD clients.

One provider initially stated that she was aware of only one case of elder abuse but once the definition and scenarios were put to her, she indicated that she was aware of more cases.

“...everyone needs to be educated even in my case, I could only think of one case until you gave me some examples....”

Service providers generally indicated they knew of only a few cases of abuse - usually between two and six cases. One service provider said that while elder abuse existed, their service had not had any instances. As one service provider put it “...it is there but it is not a huge problem”. However, their knowledge of cases of abuse seemed wider than the number of cases they reported.

It was common to hear from those interviewed that their clients do not recognise their situations as abuse. One of those consulted said that her clients take abuse for granted: “...this is just my life!”

Four service providers commented about the particular vulnerability of CALD people who do not speak English.

“They do not know about programs or services That is why we provide information sessions.”

Service providers mentioned the problem of CALD seniors without access to government services because of restrictions in their visas. A service provider described how in one case, a person would not receive assistance from the Government for 10 years.

One person, a provider of Australian background, stated that only in rare instances will CALD people disclose information to Australian staff and that this might be the reason for the small number of cases that had come forward. Five of the organisations consulted specifically indicated they employed CALD staff, of the same background as their clients and who could speak their language. Two organisations indicated that it was not just an issue of language that was needed to overcome the reluctance to open up. They seemed to be suggesting that there was a need for a common cultural background and a degree of rapport and trust required.

5.3.3.2 Responses relating to Question 2

What kinds of elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect are you aware of?

Seven of the 10 services consulted were aware of cases of elder abuse fitting into one or more of the five types of abuse used for this project. Two service providers identified financial abuse as the major problem. One organisation stated it was not aware of any cases of physical abuse while another indicated that physical abuse was rare. Two organisations were not aware of any cases of social abuse and one was not aware of any cases of neglect.

With respect to neglect, one organisation claimed it was more the case that perpetrators were guilty of ignorance, rather than abuse.

“...in the case of familial abuse, sometimes abuse is subtle and sometimes families are not aware of what they are doing or not doing.”

One provider commented that cases are so different one from another that it is difficult to classify them. One provider was involved with a case involving multiple abuse which was going to court.

Some of the cases mentioned by this group during the consultations are summarised below.

“The classic issue involves the house being sold...the senior is moved to live with the family and then they cannot cope and put the person in Homeswest accommodation...”

“...A lady lives with her son. He is a gambler. The mother pays for everything. There is a lot of psychological abuse if she does not give him what he wants – money...he threatens that she will not be able to remain in the home and it is her home. He is getting a carer’s payment but leaves her alone all day and forgets her medication.”

“...they control the money making them feel worthless...”

“There is a lady who takes \$100 from her mother’s pension towards food, the client does not believe it costs her that much to feed her.”

“The daughter of one of my clients wants her mother to change the will in her favour; she has gone to two lawyers to have the will changed. They have warned her that her mother is not competent and that in any case if the will is contested she stands to lose.”

“There is a lady who is neglected but does not see it as abuse, she would rather have her daughter and son with her than go into residential care.”

“There is a man who needs home care for his wife but she demands that he look after her and he is frail.”

“There is a lady who lives with her grandson. Care workers have expressed concern about the grandson but she speaks highly of him.”

“The [country] community shuns mental conditions and can be quite neglectful.”

“A lady from [country] was shut in her room from the minute we dropped her off to the minute we picked her up the next morning ...she was ostracised by her family.”

“A daughter asked me to remind her mother to pick up the children when she left the centre but the lady was forgetting because she had dementia.”

“There is a lady who attends the centre seven days a week and has home support ... it comes out of ignorance...but I suspect a lot of people want their parents to stay in their home because they do not want to sell the family home to pay for residential care...”

5.3.3.3 Responses relating to Question 3

Who would know if someone was being abused, mistreated or neglected?

Care workers, who attend the seniors’ homes, emerged as the most likely people to identify abuse and in whom older people would confide. Some service providers commented that they only saw their clients once a week for a few hours whereas care workers saw clients more often and on their own and developed a relationship of trust. Day Centres do have quiet rooms where clients can speak to staff members in confidence and respondents said that sometimes clients would speak to a coordinator. Another commented that the service provided at the centre was of a very personal nature and clients quickly built rapport with staff and volunteers. One service provider said that clients would be reluctant to speak to a social worker who had another perceived role – that is, as an agent of the government.

A few respondents believed seniors would open up to staff and volunteers from the same cultural background as the client and said there would be benefits from a multicultural advocacy service. Two service providers warned about the need to keep relationships on a professional level. One service provider outlined a structured or formal process to deal with allegations of abuse where cases are passed on to a work supervisor.

5.3.3.4 Responses relating to Question 4

What can be done about elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect?

There was consensus among those consulted that there is a need for people at all levels to be made more aware of elder abuse. One service provider said:

“...most clients think abuse is being hit but do not see financial, psychological abuse and neglect as abuse.”

Another provider described an “acting out” session which was very beneficial in illustrating scenarios where problems had crossed the line into elder abuse. Another service provider said:

“...we need to open up more conversation, make it more talkable.”

It was important that awareness raising strategies were designed to get through to difficult-to-reach clients who do not attend centres or are otherwise isolated.

The need for translated information was mentioned by many of the service providers and many asked for elder abuse brochures in particular languages.

Educating care workers was raised by a number of those interviewed. The possibility of having a pool of CALD workers, from a variety of communities, trained to deal with elder abuse, was raised in interviews. “Give workers power not just capacity to put clients in touch with agencies,” said one interviewee.

The need to keep staff in local government areas up to date with issues including elder abuse was mentioned. “Things change,” said one person interviewed, “and this is a new issue.” Only one service provider stated that staff of the organisation were fully trained and had a procedure in place to deal with elder abuse.

Advocare was raised by most service providers as having provided information at the centres and/or assisted with specific cases. One person spoke very highly of the work done by Advocare in a particular case.

A number of those interviewed raised the importance of having support groups for carers. One service provider said that the local government authority where she worked had been organising a monthly outing for seniors and that this had a very positive effect in building networks for its clients. The need for networking opportunities was also mentioned by others. It was often said that seniors did not want to be a burden on their families.

The need for spot checks to be carried out on carers was also identified. Two respondents talked about the role of counselling services and crisis intervention.

A help line for seniors was suggested by one of the service providers. Another suggested there was a need for something like a ‘Neighbourhood Watch’. They were not aware of the Telephone Advisory Service (TAS) provided by OPA.

Clients needed service providers to visit them in a discreet manner. A couple of those interviewed raised the difficulty of seniors attending the necessary legal and other appointments. Advocare had been able to meet clients at a day centre but once Advocare had decided to act and needed to discuss the situation with other parties, it had been difficult to take clients to appointments.

One person interviewed stated that some of her clients were illiterate and they needed to be warned not to sign things they did not understand. According to her, one of her clients had signed an Enduring Power of Attorney thinking he was signing a hospital consent form.

5.3.3.5 Responses relating to Question 5

How should we raise awareness of elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect?

When it came to awareness-raising, the consensus was that any strategies need to be multi-focussed. That is, targeting seniors, carers, professionals, and families.

“They [the family] need to have abuse explained to them, they visit once a month when the [country] pension arrives...”

“All the education options ought to be explored.”

One service provider implied that many care workers consider themselves to be adequately “trained”. Strategies targeting them would need to take this into account.

“Care workers need to have greater awareness. But they would be offended if we organised Advocare to come and do a session for them.”

The brochures produced for this project were seen as “too nice” by one person. They suggested the information on elder abuse be blunt and that more information on where to seek help and assistance was needed.

A media campaign and television was seen as useful by many. Information sessions facilitated by people of the same background as the clients were also favoured.

6. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS AND SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

6.1 Existence of Elder Abuse in CALD Communities

The consultations with CALD seniors and service providers conducted for this project indicate that elder abuse is an issue in CALD communities. All of the seniors and service providers consulted were aware of instances of abuse.

Until they participated in this research and had elder abuse explained, many of the people consulted had not identified as abuse, behaviours they had witnessed, experienced or been told about. There was a consensus among service providers

that a lack of awareness of what constitutes elder abuse was one of the real barriers to disclosure and to addressing abuse. Often, seniors who report abuse do so out of discontent with their particular circumstances, unaware that they are victims of elder abuse.

CALD seniors are considered to be at risk of abuse for a range of reasons including:

- poor English skills, particularly in relation to understanding legal and official documents and banking;
- social isolation and dependency on family members (particularly those who do not speak English and recent immigrants who have been sponsored by family members and are not eligible for or aware of services in Australia);
- an unwillingness to disclose abuse because of concerns about the stigma and shame associated with members of their community finding out; and
- cross-generational factors which result in differing expectations of care and support.

The results of this research are qualitative and based on the views of the CALD seniors and service providers who participated. The research has not attempted to quantify the incidence of abuse in CALD communities. Further research will be required to determine if the incidence of elder abuse in CALD communities is similar to rates identified in the general seniors population (i.e. one and five per cent) and to confirm key risk factors.

Recommendation 1

That further research to determine the incidence of abuse and to explore the key risk factors for CALD seniors be undertaken.

The demographic data presented in this report has been included as a profile of CALD seniors in WA. This data can be used to identify CALD groups to target for future programs and services in this area.

Maintaining an up-to-date statistical profile of CALD seniors would help to more accurately identify and target particular ethnic groups in future research. Not having this information readily available at the start of this project and relying on the anecdotal information about significant CALD groups, resulted in some significant CALD communities in WA not being targeted.

Recommendation 2

That the statistical data presented in this report be used to identify and target CALD seniors for services and programs relating to elder abuse and that an up-to-date statistical profile of CALD seniors be maintained for the purposes of research, strategy development, program/service delivery and evaluation.

Maintaining this profile could be the responsibility of the lead agency responsible for elder abuse in CALD communities (see Recommendation 5).

6.2 Types of Elder Abuse in CALD Communities

The most common form of abuse reported was financial, with respondents citing numerous instances of money being used by families without the consent of the older person. Understanding financial abuse in CALD communities, however, is not straightforward because of cultural factors including a belief (especially strong in some CALD communities) that the assets of parents belong to their children, pooling of resources to manage household expenses and financial obligations relating to immigration sponsorship.

The second most common form of abuse reported by service providers was psychological abuse. Seniors reported that they were aware of instances of social abuse and neglect but felt unsure that these would be considered mistreatment. Neglect was generally viewed as occurring out of ignorance of the needs of the older person rather than being intentional. There was little awareness of physical and sexual abuse occurring in CALD communities.

These results point to the need for further research and exploration of what constitutes elder abuse in CALD communities.

The most common abusers reported were adult children and the spouse of the older person. This finding is similar to other research into elder abuse.

Recommendation 3

That further research into what constitutes elder abuse in CALD communities is undertaken.

6.3 Raising Awareness of Elder Abuse

Both service providers and CALD seniors agreed that more awareness-raising strategies are necessary to highlight the issue of elder abuse for CALD communities. Understanding what constitutes elder abuse was identified by CALD seniors as a key strategy to prevent and address elder abuse.

Respondents agreed that awareness raising activities should focus on positive messages and be developed in consultation with CALD communities. Advertising and promoting the issue on ethnic radio and television (particularly during news programs) and using people from different ethnic communities was seen as a valuable way to raise awareness.

CALD service providers consulted believe that awareness raising strategies are more likely to be received by CALD seniors if they are provided by CALD service providers.

Developing promotional material specifically for CALD communities is preferred to direct translation of information prepared for the general Australian population of seniors. The latter approach generally lacks emphasis on important cultural issues.

The general view was that a community awareness campaign should target, not just victims of abuse, but CALD seniors in general, their families, professionals who may recognise abuse and the community at large. These may help to reach CALD seniors who are isolated and do not attend formal activities as well as those who do not speak English well or at all.

Campaigns against domestic violence were highlighted by many respondents as having broken the taboo of talking about violence within the family. A focus on breaking through the 'culture of secrecy' about elder abuse in general, but particularly in CALD communities was seen as critical in any campaign.

Most CALD service providers and seniors were unaware of the services currently offered by the Office of the Public Advocate and Advocare to respond to elder abuse. This points to a need for any community awareness campaign to include strategies to increase awareness of existing services.

Recommendation 4

That a culturally appropriate community education campaign which targets CALD seniors, CALD communities and service providers and which raises awareness of services available be developed and conducted.

6.4 Coordination of Response to Elder Abuse in CALD Communities

Responsibility for policy making, funding and service delivery for CALD seniors is shared across a number of government and community agencies. All of these agencies (to a greater or lesser extent) will need to work in partnership to address elder abuse within these communities. Service providers and the reference group for this project were concerned about the fact that no agency has responsibility for coordination of a government wide response to elder abuse in general and for CALD communities, in particular.

Recommendation 5

That:

- **a lead government agency be appointed to develop and coordinate a whole of government approach to the prevention and response to elder abuse, and a particular focus be given to addressing elder abuse in CALD communities; and**
- **partnerships be developed with agencies in the non-government sector to formulate local initiatives to combat elder abuse.**

A related strategy which was identified by the service providers consulted and the reference group is to have a key position with responsibility for promoting the interests of CALD seniors and preventing elder abuse in CALD communities. This approach is seen as necessary to ensure that CALD communities receive focussed attention rather than simply being an “add-on” or afterthought to mainstream policies and initiatives.

This position could be in the lead government agency or in a key non-government agency.

Recommendation 6

That a position be created and resourced in a government or non-government agency with responsibility for promoting the interests of CALD seniors and the prevention of elder abuse in CALD communities.

The Alliance for the Prevention of Elder abuse WA (APEA:WA) promotes a whole of government policy framework that values older people and supports the rights of older people. The Alliance brings together relevant organisations and advocates for a whole of government response to elder abuse. As such, the Alliance is an appropriate body to advocate for the recommendations contained in this report.

Recommendation 7

That this report is referred to the Western Australian Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (APEA: WA) for their endorsement and support in implementing its recommendations. Implementation of these recommendations should be in consultation with the Alliance.

It is important that any policies, services or strategies put in place to respond to and address issues of elder abuse within CALD communities be continually evaluated and monitored to ensure they deliver positive outcomes.

Recommendation 8

That continued evaluation, monitoring and accountability is required in order to address positive outcomes for Western Australian CALD communities in identifying, responding to and addressing the issues of elder abuse.

6.5 Responses to Elder Abuse in CALD Communities

Respondents to the project identified a number of strategies that could be used to respond to elder abuse in CALD communities.

6.5.1 CALD Service Providers

The CALD population is heterogeneous and cultural and linguistic barriers can make this population difficult and costly to reach. Ethnic services or ethnic community workers have a particular ability to relate to the CALD population, providing they are adequately trained and resourced.

In the forums, seniors consulted indicated they prefer to deal with service providers of their own cultural and linguistic background. This is particularly the case in trying to raise awareness, develop trusting relationships and discussing a topic as sensitive as elder abuse.

Workers providing services in the homes of CALD seniors were seen as key people in whom seniors being abused could confide. This points to a need to ensure that these workers are aware of elder abuse and services that are available to assist CALD seniors with this issue.

The model used in women's domestic violence services of having a pool of trained workers who can be engaged on a casual basis to respond to cases of elder abuse was seen as valuable and requiring further exploration about its possible use in CALD communities.

The preference to deal with CALD services and workers may present difficulties, especially for CALD seniors who are not newly arrived in Australia. In the past, community service delivery to CALD communities relied, in great part, on ethno-specific services and positions known as grant-in-aid. Then Community Support Settlement Scheme (CSSS) officers worked with particular communities with funds provided by the Department of Indigenous and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA). DIMA has since changed the focus of the CSSS to newly arrived migrants and refugees. Therefore, CSSS officers are no longer servicing CALD seniors unless they arrived in Australia as refugees. In part, this change was based on the view that mainstream services have a responsibility to service every group within Australia's diverse community.

Given this policy focus, services to prevent and respond to elder abuse in CALD communities may need to come from the health and ageing agencies rather than from the immigration area.

The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing is currently funding pilot projects in WA through a number of organisations. CALD communities targeted by these projects include Italian, Greek, Macedonian, Cambodian, Vietnamese and Chinese, Polish, former Yugoslavian, and Ukrainian. The pilot funding comes from the Community Partnerships Program (CPP). The purpose of the CPP is to fund projects that will work with aged care services so that older people from

CALD communities gain access to, and equity in, aged care services. The funding can be used to support and assist CALD seniors in their dealings with mainstream aged care providers, to build links between CALD and mainstream aged care providers, and for education and training of mainstream service providers to ensure they are sensitive and aware of the needs of CALD seniors.

CALD service providers consider that the CPP provides an opportunity to build links between CALD and aged care providers which could assist with addressing elder abuse in CALD communities. This program should be expanded.

Recommendation 9

That:

- **CALD services and ethnic community workers are adequately resourced and trained to raise awareness and respond to elder abuse in their communities;**
- **a casual pool of trained CALD workers, from across the different CALD communities, be established to work specifically in the area of elder abuse; and**
- **the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing expand funding for programs (such as the Community Partnerships Program), which can assist with preventing and responding to elder abuse in CALD communities by improving links between CALD and mainstream agencies and access for CALD seniors to aged care services.**

6.5.2 Cross cultural training for non-CALD providers

The project officer tried to refer some cases of abuse which were reported during the course of the project. However, getting mainstream agencies that could respond to the abuse to do so in a culturally appropriate manner proved difficult. This indicates there is a lack of understanding about the needs of CALD communities among policy makers and service providers and that cross-cultural training and training about the CALD sector should be made available.

The cross cultural training should include:

- information on the migration experience;
- cultural factors and their effect on attitudes and behaviours;
- training on working through interpreters;
- information about the grass roots services and organisations available to CALD communities and how to work with them; and
- an accurate description of the funding, resources and capacity of CALD services and the responsibilities of mainstream agencies.

Recommendation 10

That service providers and policy makers, particularly those working in the aged care and family/domestic violence areas, receive cross-cultural training, training about the CALD sector and training about issues for CALD seniors and communities.

6.5.3 Establishment of a Hotline/Helpline

Many of the seniors and service providers consulted wanted to see the establishment of a hotline/helpline to report elder abuse. They stressed that any telephone service needs to be able to assure confidentiality so that nothing gets back to the family or community and also that the information is not necessarily reported to the Police.

A number of helplines are in existence in WA. These include the Office of the Public Advocate's Telephone Advisory Service (TAS), Advocare's telephone advisory service, and the Seniors' Telephone Information Service. However, none of these are what could be considered, a "hotline".

Typically, calls to these lines are answered by a receptionist who can direct callers to a variety of services. They rely on the caller to nominate someone to talk to. In some cases, if the relevant person is not available, callers are invited to leave a message or are put through to a "voice mail". In, at least one case, the call is first directed to a recorded message and directs the caller to stay on the line if they wish to speak to someone.

These types of services are difficult for seniors to use, particularly if they do not speak English well or at all, if they need an interpreter, if they are poor communicators and/or if they are unfamiliar with computerised language or instructions. This is a significant problem for people who need a great deal of courage to make the call to report abuse and who may not have many opportunities to call.

A direct helpline needs to be established to respond to seniors and others who are seeking assistance with elder abuse. One of the existing services at Advocare or the Office of the Public Advocate could be streamlined to make it more readily accessible to seniors in general, but particularly to CALD seniors.

Recommendation 11

That a telephone hotline/helpline service providing readily accessible assistance to seniors who wish to discuss concerns about elder abuse be made available. Interpreter services will need to be readily available to the hotline to ensure that CALD seniors who have difficulty with English can access the service.

6.5.4 Increase Opportunities for CALD Seniors to be Involved in Social Activities

One strategy for individuals to combat elder abuse is to develop and maintain contacts outside the immediate family and within the community at large. This is often not easy for CALD people, especially for seniors, due to cultural and language considerations. They may have lost contact with acquaintances and become isolated as they get older.

Service providers all spoke of the benefits to their clients of attending day centres. However, many older people only attend a day centre one day a week. Day centres often cater for frail seniors and are not generally attended by well seniors. It is important that resources be allocated to increase the networking opportunities for CALD seniors. The experience of CALD seniors in one of the local government areas consulted shows the benefits of participating in activities and maintaining social networks.

Recommendation 12

That resources be allocated to increase the number of social activities and programs available to CALD seniors to prevent social isolation and decrease the risk of elder abuse.

6.5.5 Increase Education of CALD Seniors Migrating to Australia

There has been a substantial increase in the number of senior parents coming to Australia to join their children in the last two financial years (see Table 11 in Appendix F). This is the result of a policy change that allows a greater number of parents to come under what is called a “contributory parent class”. There are three times more visa places in the contributory parent category than in the parent category (up to 3,500 places versus up to 1,000 places annually) resulting in an increased rate of granting of the visas. The contributory parent class need to pay a substantial amount of money up front (up to A\$29,155 versus A\$3,070 in the parent category) to obtain their visa and as a contribution to their future health and welfare costs (DIMA, 2005).

All senior parents coming to Australia are required to be sponsored and have an “Assurance of Support”. According to information provided by DIMA (*Correspondence from Ian Baker, Manager Settlement and Multicultural Affairs, Western Australian Office, 3 November 2005*), “the sponsor is generally the Australian relative who undertakes sponsorship obligations for an applicant migrating from overseas or applying for permanent residence in Australia. The sponsor gives a written undertaking to provide support to the applicant(s) during their first two years in Australia if applying outside Australia or for the two years following granting of their visa if applying in Australia. This includes accommodation and financial assistance as required to meet reasonable living needs.”

The “Assurance of Support” is a legal commitment by a person to repay to the Commonwealth Government any recoverable social security payment made by Centrelink to those covered by the assurance. For parents coming to Australia on a basic parent visa, the assurance of support is in place for two years while for contributory parents, it is in place for 10 years. A refundable bond is also required in addition to the assurance of support. The amount of the bond differs depending on the parent visa class. In 2005, the bonds were A\$3,500 for the primary applicant and A\$1,500 for other family members with basic parent visas and A\$10,000 for the primary applicant and A\$4,000 for other family members with contributory parent visas (www.immi.gov.au).

During the project, numerous people mentioned the difficulties experienced by older parents coming from overseas to join their children in Australia. Many point to a clash of expectations between the parents and their children, and sometimes their grandchildren, in Australia. Parents may have to sell everything and cut their links with their previous country of residence, may direct their resources into property belonging to their child(ren) and/or use their funds to maintain them during their period of establishment in Australia. Additionally, given the significant time it takes to obtain a parent visa, there is a danger that parents coming to Australia may opt to apply for a contributing parent visa, use all their assets to meet these costs and be left without funds once they arrive in Australia.

The conditions under which many older parents migrate to Australia can increase dependency on their children for accommodation and financial support for two years (and, in some cases, 10 or more years). Parents need to be fully informed of these issues and the need to have clear agreements about their resources and needs in place.

Recommendation 13

That DIMA provides more information and assistance to parents coming to Australia to join their children. This information could include the kinds of problems they may encounter and, in particular, make them aware of the need to clarify expectations and have clear agreements on matters related to their support once in Australia.

6.5.6 Welfare and safety checks for CALD seniors

A suggestion which was raised a number of times by seniors and by service providers was to have someone check on the welfare of vulnerable seniors, particularly those who receive care from a relative at home. This is a delicate matter which involves issues of privacy and is potentially paternalistic rather than empowering. However, it may be worthwhile to give frail seniors the option to have a suitable agency check on their welfare from time to time.

Recommendation 14

That further consideration be given to the appropriateness and viability of developing services that provide safety and welfare checks for frail seniors.

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APPENDIX A

REFERENCE GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

CARE AND RESPECT

PROJECT TO RESEARCH ELDER ABUSE IN CALD COMMUNITIES

SCOPE/PURPOSE OF REFERENCE GROUP

The Reference Group will:

- provide advice to the Public Advocate on the development and scope of this project;
- provide advice and support to the project officer/consultant during the completion of the project; and
- review the draft report and comment on improving the report before it is finalised.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The Reference Group will meet on a bi-monthly basis during the course of the project. As the project will be completed by the end of 2005 it is expected that the Reference Group will meet on three to four occasions.

APPENDIX B

ORGANISATIONS CONSULTED IN INITIAL PHASE OF PROJECT

CARE AND RESPECT

PROJECT TO RESEARCH ELDER ABUSE IN CALD COMMUNITIES

Advocare – **Bethany Faye**, Elder Abuse Coordinator, **and Maureen Sellick**, Advocate

Australian Asian Association of WA (Inc) - Olga Ramasamy, Chief Executive Officer and Chris Bramananda, Community Aged Care Coordinator.

Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia – Tineke Van der Ecken, Executive Officer and Alfred Odongkara, Senior Policy Officer

Ethnic Disability Support Service - Jenny Au Yeong, Executive Officer and Luba McMaugh, Advocacy Officer

Greek Welfare Centre - Kay Nicholls, Chief Executive Officer

Italo-Australian Welfare and Cultural Centre Inc - Sarina Sirna, Managing Director and Pina Catalano, Community Partnerships Officer

Multicultural Aged Care Service WA - Maria Bunn, Manager

The Chung Wah Association - Theresa Kwok, Manager Welfare and Community Services

Umbrella Multicultural Community Care Services Inc - Anna Maria Harrison, Program Manager and Irene Mackiewicz, Vice President

Police,– Crime Prevention and Community Support - Nilda Eisen, Multicultural Officer

Women’s Health Care House and Multicultural Women’s Advocacy Service - Eloise Maglizza, Ethnic Liaison Officer and Community Service Worker

APPENDIX C

SERVICE PROVIDERS CONSULTED THROUGH ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

CARE AND RESPECT

PROJECT TO RESEARCH ELDER ABUSE IN CALD COMMUNITIES

Cambridge Senior Services - Judith Milnes, Karen Harvey, Di Letheridge

Catherine King Home - Carol Van Malsen Coordinator

City of Canning – Barbara Kasprzak, Coordinator Multicultural Respite Service

City of Fremantle Day Centre, Carer Support and Disability Programs - Lisa Alvares, Support Services Coordinator

City of Stirling Community Services - Beth Jasas, Services and Development Officer – Seniors and Volunteers

City of Wanneroo, Alexandra Heights - Rina Coclia, Multicultural Activities Officer and Volunteers Gina and Albina

Multicultural Service Centre of WA HACC Day Centre - Sue White, Home and Community Care Coordinator and Stephen De Souza, Administration Officer

Swan Community Care Services - Carole Mc Mahon, Client Services Coordinator

Town of Melville

Town of Vincent - Amanda Bateman, Community Development Officer – Seniors

Vincent House, Southern Cross Respite - Marina Tassone, Assistant Coordinator

APPENDIX D

ELDER ABUSE SCENARIOS
CARE AND RESPECT
PROJECT TO RESEARCH
ELDER ABUSE IN CALD COMMUNITIES

Scenario 1 (Financial and Psychological)

My Mum is 85. Last year my older brother who was going to visit relatives overseas asked Mum for \$5,000 for an emergency. She had been sick and he told her that he would use the money in Scenario she got unwell and he had to return in a hurry. He promised to return the money. He has now been back for more than 6 months but has not returned the money to Mum. Mum has asked him but he said he that he had to spend the money during the trip and has not got any money. Every time Mum asks for the money he stops ringing her and coming over to visit her for a while.

Scenario 2 (Financial and Psychological)

My friend who is 74 came to Australia to live with her oldest son 7 years ago when she became a widow. She sold her home and furniture and sent the money to her son in Australia. Two years ago she married a man she met in Australia. My friend asked her son for her money. He refuses to give her any money and tells her that he spent the money bringing her to Australia and looking after her here. She says they money is hers and had only sent it to her son to put in the bank. The son will not let my friend see her grandchildren now.

Scenario 3 (Financial)

My aunt has been taking money from my Grandma who does not speak English and is not used to going to the bank. She knows my Grandma's PIN number and uses her card to take money out of the ATM. She says that it is to pay for Grandma's bills but she is paying bills for things she has booked in Grandma's name. She also uses the money to go shopping and never shows anyone any accounts.

Scenario 4 (Physical and Financial)

A neighbour contacted a government office about his friend, a migrant with few relatives in Australia, being mistreated by his son. The man's wife had died and the man lived with at home with his son. The neighbour said that his friend had dementia and would forget things. He said that the son had problems and was unemployed. When he got frustrated with his father, he would push him around, would hit him and yell at him. The son was

approached and confirmed what the neighbour said. The government officer could not send someone to help at home because they felt intimidated by the son. The man's sister was afraid of her nephew and did not want to get involved. The son did not want to go and live somewhere else because by living at home he did not have to pay for expenses and he was concerned that he would lose his inheritance when his father died. Eventually, a nephew was made "guardian" of the man by the government and he was able to check on his uncle and ensure his cousin did not abuse him.

Scenario 5 (Neglect)

This Scenario involves a couple that came to Australia from a small village in a European country. They have been in Australia for many years but their English is not good and they lack links to community organisations. The wife is in her late 70s and their husband is 82 and live with one of their two sons. Both of them have dementia and have problems making their own decisions. The son who lives with them assists with their care and they also receive services from a government agency. At one stage, the agency arranged for the father to go into respite care. But the man's other son, arranged to have him return home. This was not in the interest of his mother or his father who could not be looked after properly at home and was contrary to the assessment of the agency providing assistance at home. The son who arranged to have his father returned home was concerned that his mother and brother were being treated more favourable than his father. He also distrusted his brother who he believed had previously been violent towards his father and had taken financial advantage of his parents in the past.

Scenario 6 (Physical)

My mum had a stroke and is in a nursing home. Dad wants her to have Asian meals and traditional treatments. He wants her to have a herbal medicine and a form of Chinese reflexology. Mum is very frail and has been negatively affected by the treatments arranged by my Dad. The nursing home is happy to provide Asian meals providing they are mashed and a professional reflexologist but Dad is not happy. He keeps taking her herbal medicines and food secretly. The doctors are worried that Mum will choke and she could be seriously affected. Dad wants to control Mum's life.

Scenario 7 (Neglect)

A daughter got in touch with a government agency out of concern for her mother. The mother had severe dementia but her father would not agree to get help at home for her. The family had migrated from Eastern Europe where they had lived in the country. Here in Australia, since his retirement, the husband's main activities involve tending his vegetable garden. The daughter was concerned that the house was very dirty and that her mother was seldom showered. She was also concerned that her mother was not eating well. The daughter said that her father was suspicious of the government and government officers but her mother was suffering as a result from lack of care.

Scenario 8 (Neglect, Physical and Financial)

An elderly woman with dementia was living with her adult children and grandchildren. The woman's children would go to work during the day and the grandchildren would go to school. Because of her dementia, the family would lock the woman in a cupboard during the day while they were out. The woman's children did not want to put her in a home. They were embarrassed and needed her pension for the family's budget.

Scenario 9 (Social Isolation)

A couple, now in their 80s, came to Australia from an Asian country some years back to live with their son. At the time, the son and his wife had two young children who the grandparents looked after. The son and his wife work full time. The grandparents never went anywhere other than to take the grandchildren out. Now, the grandchildren are at school but the grandparents are still isolated and at home. They have made no links in the community and seem very depressed. When neighbours have spoken to them they have said to come back when their son is home because he does not want them to talk to strangers. They are generally locked at home.

Scenario 10 (Financial/Social Isolation/Psychological/Neglect)

A woman now in her late 60s came to Australia to be close to her children who came as refugees ten years earlier. She is on the pension and lives with her daughter and son-in-law and their children. When she got the pension, her family convinced her to borrow \$5,000 on her credit card and give this and another \$5,000 she had brought to Australia as savings to help them put a deposit on a house. She was happy to be helping her daughter and her family and to live close to her grandchildren. As the years have gone on, things are not working out. Her grandchildren are now teenagers and they do not care about her. They have the music and TV very loud and do not want her to come out of her room when their friends visit them. They yell at her and call her names. If she says anything her daughter defends them and there is a fight. She is afraid of making something to eat for herself or getting up at night for a drink because the family complains that she is in their way or that she wakes them up. She can tell anyone about this for fear of being thrown out. She is not able to move out of home because she is still paying her credit card loan and has no savings.

APPENDIX E



**CARE AND RESPECT
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Name:	
Title:	
Service:	
Clients Country Of Origin:	
Ages:	
Decision Making Capacity:	

<p>Question 1 - Is Elder Abuse, mistreatment, neglect a problem in your community?</p> <p>Note: Are there any unique issues for this particular community?</p> <p>We are not wanting to point the finger at any community but want to seek the views of migrant communities</p>
<p>Answer:</p>

Telephone: (08) 9278 7300
(Country callers only Toll Free): 1800 807 437
Fax: (08) 9278 7333

Question 2 - What kinds of Elder Abuse, mistreatment or neglect are you aware of?

- Financial
- Physical
- Psychological
- Social
- Neglect

Answer:

Question 3 – Who would know if someone was being abused, mistreated or neglected?

Note: Who could people talk to in such a situation? How could one identify abuse?

Answer:

Question 4 - What can be done about elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect? Eg: (If some strategies are more important than others note them in order of importance.)

- Encouraging/strengthening older person's social networks
- Helpline
- Respite care
- Support groups for victims
- Support groups for carers
- Counselling services
- Mediation
- Advocacy
- Legal redress
- Emergency refuges
- Financial assistance
- Case management
- Guardianship/administration
- Crisis intervention services

- Other

Answer:

Question 5 - How should we raise awareness of elder abuse, mistreatment or neglect?

- Education of elders
- Education of professionals to recognise
- Education of general public to recognise
- Public campaign about community attitude to ageing/elder persons
- Other

Answer:

Question 6 - Other contacts

Answer:

APPENDIX F

PROFILE OF CALD SENIORS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

As mentioned earlier, CALD seniors were defined for the purposes of this project as people 60 years and over born overseas in countries other than “Main English Speaking Countries”.

Total Number of CALD Seniors by Age

According to the ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing, there are 51,227 CALD seniors in Western Australia. CALD seniors constitute 19.91% of the total population of seniors in Western Australia (257,338). Table 2 below shows CALD seniors in WA by gender and age groups.

Gender	Age 60-64		Age 65-69		Age 70-74		Age 75-plus		TOTAL Age 60-plus	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Males	7,246	53	5,833	51	5,118	50	6,991	44	25,118	49
Females	6,290	47	5,573	49	5,141	50	9,035	56	26,039	51
Persons	13,536	100	11,406	100	10,259	100	16,026	100	51,227	100

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing.
Columns may not sum to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Top 15 Source Countries of CALD Seniors

Table 3 below shows the countries of origin of the 15 largest groups of CALD seniors in Western Australia.

Table 3: CALD seniors in Western Australia by age and country of birth – top 15 countries					
Country	Age 60-64	Age 65-69	Age 70-74	Age 75-plus	Age 60-plus total
Italy	2,938	3,071	2,915	3,972	12,295
Netherlands	1,059	924	900	1,477	4,360
India	978	830	812	1,220	3,840
Germany	894	545	628	818	2,885
Poland	275	361	428	1,280	2,344
Malaysia	826	474	344	384	2,028
Burma	391	344	265	474	1,474
Yugoslavia (Federal Republic)	90	306	241	442	1,379
China (excl'dg SARS, Taiwan)	211	261	224	391	1,087
Singapore	423	222	169	233	1,047
Vietnam	272	235	208	265	980
Former Yugoslav Republic	219	214	99	149	681
Indonesia	188	127	136	189	640
Sri Lanka	170	106	94	192	562
Portugal	167	151	101	105	524
Total	9,101	8,171	7,564	11,591	36,126

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

Seniors born in Italy constitute the largest group, accounting for 24% of all CALD seniors in WA. As indicated in the Table 3, other large groups of CALD seniors in WA were those born in the Netherlands (8.51%), India (7.49%), Germany (5.63%), Poland (4.57%) and Malaysia 3.95%).

Just over half (53.02%) of the seniors in the Table 3 are over the age of 70. The proportion of CALD seniors 70 years and over who are Italian born is 56.01%. It is interesting to note that the great majority of seniors born in Poland (72.87%) are over 70 years of age whereas just over a third of the seniors born in Malaysia, Former Yugoslavia, Singapore and Portugal (35.9%; 38.4%; 36.4%; 39.3%) are in this age bracket.

Languages Spoken at Home

Table 4 below provides information on the 15 most commonly spoken languages by CALD seniors at home. It is likely that this data reflects the preferred language of the seniors concerned.

Table 4: CALD seniors in Western Australia by age and language other than English spoken at home – top 15 languages

	Age 60-64	Age 65-69	Age 70-74	Age 75-plus	Age 60-plus total
Italian	3,033	3,129	2,950	3,991	13,103
German	618	395	433	691	2,137
Croatian	635	451	294	472	1,852
Cantonese	594	416	340	466	1,816
Polish	194	269	337	976	1,776
Greek	422	465	322	540	1,749
Macedonian	339	357	185	256	1,137
Vietnamese	239	199	176	228	842
French	206	181	147	264	798
Spanish	214	156	84	122	576
Portuguese	176	158	118	119	571
Mandarin	235	134	97	103	569
Serbian	155	123	76	100	454
Malay	165	88	48	60	361
Arabic (incl. Lebanese)	122	73	72	87	354
Total	7,347	6,594	5,679	8,475	28,095

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

More than half of the total population of CALD seniors (54.84%) speak a language other than English at home.

Italian is the language most commonly spoken at home by CALD seniors. Notably, it is spoken by more seniors than those born in Italy. This must be because it is spoken by a small number (808) of seniors born in other CALD countries. Chinese languages (Cantonese and Mandarin) are also languages spoken by more than twice as many CALD seniors (2385) than those born in China (1087). This is a reflection of the ethnic background of people born in South East Asian countries. Greek, the preferred language of 1749 CALD seniors is also significantly over-represented as a language when compared with what is likely to be the number of Greek-born seniors in WA. We must assume that the number of Greek-born seniors in WA is less than 500.

German and Polish are spoken at home by a large proportion of the population of seniors in WA born in those countries, 74.07% and 75.77% respectively.

Although the Netherlands and India constitute the second and third largest groups of CALD seniors in WA, neither Dutch nor Hindi appear among the 15 most popular languages spoken by CALD seniors. By deduction, this means that most CALD seniors born in these countries are English speakers.

Distribution of CALD Seniors Across Local Government Areas

Table 5 below provides information on the distribution of CALD seniors across Statistical Local Areas in Western Australia. The local area of Stirling has by far the largest number of CALD seniors. Its 8,746 CALD seniors represent 17.07% of all CALD seniors in Western Australia. Only eight areas have more than 2,000 CALD seniors and the CALD seniors in these areas together represent over half (52.74%) of all CALD seniors living in Western Australia.

	Age 60-69	Age 70-plus	Age total seniors
	No.	No.	No.
Stirling	4,178	4,568	8,746
Bayswater	1,549	1,784	3,333
Melville	1,430	1,434	2,864
Canning	1,305	1,421	2,726
Cockburn	1,388	1,167	2,555
Swan	1,146	1,207	2,353
Vincent	871	1,405	2,276
Gosnells	1,112	1,053	2,165
Wanneroo	1,067	865	1,932
Fremantle	741	920	1,661
Belmont	630	839	1,469
Joondalup	593	610	1,203
Kalamunda	593	610	1,203
Armadale	597	531	1,128
Victoria Park	416	678	1,094
Rockingham	569	505	1,074
South Perth	421	473	894
Mundaring	391	367	758
Cambridge	332	391	723
Mandurah	332	357	689
Bassendean	305	357	662
Bunbury	225	371	596
Nedlands	277	292	569
Albany	239	319	558

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

Marital Status

As can be seen in table 6 below, CALD senior men are more likely to be in a registered marriage than CALD senior women. The proportions of CALD senior males and females in registered marriages are similar to those in the general community in which 74% of senior males and 51% of senior women are in registered marriages (Department for Community Development, Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering (2004), *A Profile of Western Australia's Seniors, Topic Sheet No 4 - in the series 'Western Australian Seniors'*). The figures may be explained by the higher widowed rate for women who have higher life expectancy than males. Table 7 below, which separates seniors into distinct age groups appears to confirm this.

	Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%
Registered marriage	18,255	73	12,536	48
Defacto marriage	313	1	150	1
Not married	4,993	20	11,422	44
Not applicable	1,494	6	1,830	7
Total CALD Seniors	25,055	100	25,938	100

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing
Columns may not sum to exactly 100% due to rounding.

* 'Registered marriage' includes people who are legally married and currently living together as a couple.

** 'Defacto marriage' includes people who are not legally married but who are currently living together as a couple.

*** 'Not married' includes divorced, separated, widowed and never-married persons.

**** 'Not applicable' includes people living in non-private dwellings etc (eg nursing homes).

	Males		Females	
	No.	% Married In cohort	No.	% Married In cohort
Age 60-64	5,455	76	4,174	67
Age 65-69	4,429	76	3,406	62
Age 70-74	3,816	75	2,564	50
Age 75-plus	4,555	65	2,392	26
Age 60-plus total	18,255	73	12,536	48

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

Living Arrangements

Table 8 below describes the living arrangements of CALD seniors in Western Australia. As indicated in that table just under half of CALD seniors live as a couple without family (49%). However, over one-fifth (21%) live in single person households. In the case of senior CALD females, more than a quarter of them (28%) live alone. For seniors in the 75 years and over age group, the proportion living in a single person household increases to 30 per cent, with 39% of females age 75 and over living alone.

Seventeen per cent of CALD seniors live as a couple with adult children. This type of living arrangement is greatest for seniors in the youngest age group (ages 60 to 64) where 26% live as couples with adult children. Few single CALD senior males (2%) live with their adult children while nine per cent of CALD single senior females live with their adult children.

Three per cent of CALD seniors live in a non-private dwelling (predominantly nursing homes and aged care accommodation). It is interesting to note that the percentage of seniors overall living in a non-private dwelling is more than double this at seven per cent (OSIV: *A Profile of Western Australian Seniors*, 2004). This may reflect the perception that CALD people are more reluctant to resort to nursing home and aged care accommodation.

	CALD seniors (60-64)		CALD seniors (65-69)		CALD seniors (70-74)		CALD seniors (75%)		All CALD seniors (60+)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All CALD seniors										
Couple family with children	3,454	26	2,127	19	1,352	14	1,582	10	8,515	17
Couple family without children	6,567	50	6,051	55	5,462	55	6,466	41	24,546	49
One-parent family	731	6	560	5	515	5	1,079	7	2,885	6
'Other' family	74	1	73	1	73	1	183	1	403	1
Lone person	1,802	14	1,864	17	2,154	22	4,726	30	10,546	21
Unrelated individual living in family household	37	<1	31	<1	24	<1	57	<1	149	<1
Group household member	152	1	142	1	132	1	200	1	626	1
Not applicable (eg non-private dwellings etc)	209	2	169	2	244	2	1,333	8	1,955	4
Total CALD seniors	13,026	100	11,017	100	9,956	100	15,626	100	49,625	100

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing
Columns may not sum to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Home Ownership

Almost three quarters (73%) of CALD seniors own their own homes and another 7% are in the process of purchasing their home. As indicated in the table below 11 per cent of CALD seniors rent their homes. In the general senior community of Western Australia the rate of home ownership is slightly lower at (71%) and that of rental slightly higher (12.5%).

Home tenure	N	%
Fully owned	37,139	73
Being purchased	3,351	7
Being purchased under rent/buy scheme	205	0
Rented	5,793	11
Being occupied rent-free	491	1
Being occupied under a life-tenure scheme	306	1
Other tenure type	393	1
Not stated	1,360	3
Not applicable	1,949	4
Total CALD seniors	50,987	100

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing
Columns may not sum to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Gross Weekly Income

Almost half of CALD seniors (45%) have an income of under \$200 per week. In the case of Australian born seniors and seniors born overseas in Main English Speaking countries the percentage with a weekly income of under \$200 per week is under one third (32% and 31% respectively), with 50% and 55% respectively of these two groups earning between \$200 and \$599 dollars per week. At 3%, the proportion of CALD seniors with nil or negative income is 1% higher than for the other two populations of seniors. In the higher income brackets the differences are much less with nine per cent of seniors born overseas earning above \$600 per week, compared to 11% of Australian born seniors.

Weekly individual income	CALD seniors		Australian-born		Born main ESC		Total seniors	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Nil or negative income	1,681	3	3,263	2	1,302	2	6,246	2
\$1 to \$159	6,945	14	14,859	10	6,980	11	28,784	11
\$160 to \$199	14,123	28	29,424	20	11,093	18	54,640	21
\$200 to \$299	12,372	24	39,684	27	19,770	31	71,826	27
\$300 to \$599	8,769	17	33,407	23	13,692	22	55,868	21
\$600 to \$799	1,828	4	7,794	5	2,863	4	12,485	5
\$800 to \$999	919	2	3,685	2	1,511	2	6,115	2
\$1,000 or more	1,500	3	5,964	4	2,193	3	9,657	4
Not stated	3,090	6	9,315	6	3,926	6	16,331	6
	51,227	100%	147,395	100%	63,330	100%	261,952	100%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001 Census of Population and Housing
Columns may not sum to exactly 100% due to rounding.

CALD Seniors Joining Children in Australia

According to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) a total of 1,257 older parents have come to Western Australia to join their children since the 1999/2000 year. Table 11 below shows the number of arrivals, broken down by age and by year of arrival.

Year	60-64	65-69	70-74	75+	Total
1999/2000	32	39	42	34	147
2000/2001	22	36	28	40	126
2001/2002	12	16	9	22	59
2002/2003	11	15	19	11	56
2003/2004	145	136	80	82	443
2004/2005	128	108	96	94	426
Total	350	350	274	283	1257

The number of seniors arriving from overseas to join their children in Western Australia is significant. However, it is impossible to estimate from the information in Table 11 the proportion of parents who are from a CALD country.

In any event, as a proportion of the total population of seniors born overseas, they constitute 1.2%.

Of interest in Table 11 is the substantial increase in the number of senior parents coming to Australia to join their children in the last two financial years.

Public Advocate

CALD communities project



CARE AND RESPECT FOR OLDER PEOPLE OF CULTURAL AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD) BACKGROUNDS

The Public Advocate is an independent statutory officer appointed under the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1990* to promote and protect the rights, dignity and autonomy of people with decision-making disabilities and to reduce their risk of neglect, exploitation and abuse.

The Office of the Public Advocate has employed a Project Officer, Paula Cristoffanini, to seek the views of organisations and people of CALD backgrounds about caring for older people.

WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE OR MISTREATMENT?

The Australian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (ANPEA) defines elder abuse as:

“any act occurring within a relationship where there is an implication of trust, which results in harm to an older person. Abuse can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological, social and/or neglect (ANPEA, 1999).”

Abuse can occur in the following ways:

- Financial abuse - taking money from older people and pensioners
- Physical abuse - hitting, pushing
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse - being made fun of, teased, shouted at
- Social abuse - being ignored, denied contact with friends or family
- Neglect - being left without care, without food, clothes, shelter or medical treatment

The report, *Elder Abuse in Western Australia* (Nov 2002), completed by Curtin University's Freemasons Centre for Research into Aged Care and commissioned by the Office of Seniors Interests and Volunteering, indicates that 75% of older people who experienced abuse had a decision-making disability. The methodology used in the Curtin study involved surveying general practitioners and other service providers. The study was not designed with people from CALD backgrounds in mind and did not explore elder abuse in CALD communities.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Australian Social Trends 2002, Population – Population Composition: Older Overseas Born Australians), overseas born people represented a third of the population aged 65 and over in the 2000 Census. This population has increased rapidly in recent years and is projected to grow more rapidly through the coming decades.

In Western Australia, the older overseas born population was greater than the older Australian born population (12% compared to 7%). This is a diverse population and at least some of this group may require special consideration in terms of policy development, planning and service delivery, particularly as they move into the older age groups.

THE PROJECT OFFICER WILL:

- Consult with people of CALD backgrounds and organisations that provide services to people of CALD backgrounds about the mistreatment of older people;
- Identify whether mistreatment of older people is an issue in CALD communities;
- Gather the views of people CALD background on how best to identify and respond to mistreatment when it occurs;
- Identify appropriate ways to raise awareness of the issues of mistreatment of older people of CALD backgrounds and suitable community responses to the issue;
- Develop recommendations for future strategies and priorities to address mistreatment of older people of CALD backgrounds; and
- Report to the West Australian Government’s Active Ageing Strategy.

CONTACT THE PROJECT OFFICER:

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