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| World Elder Abuse Awareness Day – Wednesday 15 June 2022 |
| Video transcript |
| OFFICIAL |

Mr Josh Bull, Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Parliamentary Secretary for Carers and Volunteers

Hon. Anthony Carbines, Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers

Mr Gerard Mansour, Commissioner for Senior Victorians and Ambassador for Elder Abuse Prevention

Mr Mark Chenery, Common Cause Australia

**Prevention Panel members:**

Michelle Lord

Cathy Horsley

Kate Gibson

Dilnaz Bil

**Response Panel members:**

Alasdair Gall

Marnie Coghlan

Carla Wilkie

Jenni Dickson

**Mr Gerard Mansour, Commissioner for Senior Victorians and Ambassador for Elder Abuse Prevention:** Well good morning everybody. Thank you so much for being here and can I welcome everybody to today's event to commemorate World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

Can I start by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet, pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging, and can I acknowledge victim survivors who have experienced or are currently experiencing elder abuse, including those who have been killed as a result of family violence. It's for those that we do this work.

I'm the Parliamentary Secretary for health, Parliamentary Secretary for Carers and Volunteers, and I would like to welcome you all to this morning's event.

I’m delighted to be your MC today, and I look forward to taking part in a very important discussion.

Just some housekeeping matters to start with. You will have noticed from the agenda that we've packed a lot into our 90 minutes today. I'm sure many of you will have questions for our terrific speakers and I encourage you to log into Slido as you can ask the questions throughout today's session. I understand that the link was included in the invitation and you can also open this in your web browser and enter the acronym WEAAD. I also note this event is being recorded and we'll make that recording available at the end of this event.

We all, of course, know that family violence is indeed a very sensitive matter and these conversations can be difficult. Should you or any members of your family require support we encourage you to contact a family violence support service or mental health wellbeing support service. Those details are also included in the chat.

It's now my great pleasure to welcome my friend and parliamentary colleague and Minister for disability, ageing and carers, The Hon. Anthony Carbines, for the welcoming address. Welcome Minister Carbines.

**Hon. Anthony Carbines, Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers:** G’day Josh. Thanks very much. It's good to join you and everyone online this morning.

I'd also like to thank the First Peoples and acknowledge them and the Traditional Owners of the land. I'm dialling in from the banks of the Birrarung here in my electorate and I also pay my respects to elders both past and present, other elders from communities who might be joining us today.

Can I also acknowledge all victims who have experienced or who are experiencing elder abuse and acknowledge their strength and resilience. It's for them that we do undertake this work and to Josh, Parliamentary Secretary, we're a great team if I do say so myself and we're in good hands today with Josh and I thank him for his work and advocacy in our portfolio areas.

Gerard Mansour, the Commissioner for Senior Victorians and Ambassador for elder abuse prevention, moderating the panel discussions this morning.

Mark Chenery, keynote speaker from Common Cause Australia who will talk about the framing age message guide and applying it in practice. That's really about getting to the tin tacks of how to make it work. That's going to be great.

Experts from across the sector joining us, Michelle Lord the executive officer for the Southern Melbourne PCP that do amazing work, Cathy Horsley the team leader at Community Building the City of Port Phillip. Used to do a lot of community building stuff in Bracks government days with Minister Pike back then so community building never ceases to ‑ never stops and there's always different ways to go about it. Looking forward to hearing from Cathy today.

Kate Gibson is our Manager for Primary Prevention and Education at Eastern Community Legal Service.

Dilnaz Billimoria ‑ hope I got that right ‑ who is a community representative and volunteer at Eastern Community Legal Centre. Welcome to you.

Carla Wilkie, Elder Abuse Liaison Officer at Western Health representing the integrated model of care today. Marnie Coglan, helpline advocate at Seniors Rights Victoria, really important work and get some good feedback there today I'm sure.

Senior Sergeant Alasdair Gall who has been a stats person too in sharing a lot of information and access around the work that Vic Pol do. He's at family violence command and really pleased to have your support and involvement in a lot of the work that we do in our advisory groups over the past couple of years.

Jenni Dickson, our Executive Manager at Better Place Australia, Elder Abuse Prevention Network members, integrated model of care project partners and staff, other guests joining us virtually. Welcome everybody. Really good that you've found time to catch up this morning.

The third year that we've done this online to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Pandemic means we're catching up in many different ways and in some ways a bit of a throw back, in a lot of way being able to get back to face‑to‑face in person, but very happy we've found a way to catch up today.

Of course talking more about how elder abuse is...big public health issue is very much around elder abuse and a human rights issue.

Protecting the rights of older Victorians, something very important to each and every one of us. We've all got a vested interest in how we age and in ageing well. We're all going to get there in we're not there already so let's make sure it's the best part of the contributions we can make in our lives together.

More than one in six Victorians aged over 60 older generation projected to double by 2057. 15 per cent of older people may experience some form of elder abuse and the national elder abuse prevalence study released by that amazing organisation Australian Institute of Family Studies in late December 2021 found one in six older Australians surveyed had experienced abuse in just the past 12 months.

The real number may be higher because many people don't feel they can speak up. That's not acceptable and we have to work harder so that people are better informed and protected and know where those avenues are to raise their voice to feel they have advocates to represent them and to advance their interests in what are pretty challenging circumstances.

That's why elder abuse awareness day remains so important and that we have a focus on the work that we're all doing together, particularly on this day to bring that together, share our stories, drew a bit of strength from each other and our work and recalibrate on where to next.

Older people do deserve our respect and dignity in later years, but also because they continue to contribute to our community in a different way, in a different engagement, often post‑work, a time of reflection and recalibrating where do you want to make a contribution in the community more broadly.

Many of us, of course, along with our government, are working hard to do more around preventing family violence which includes of course elder abuse. Just in the budget this year nearly $3 million around our responses to a range of initiatives and that includes our trial of integrated model of care for responding to suspected elder abuse led by our five public health services, eight elder abuse prevention networks, many of you here today, and the very significant work you've been able to do over time has helped lead a lot of evidence‑based practice.

That's helped us tell our story and advocate in government around where the resourcing effort needs to go, where our focus needs to be and really that work drives a lot of informing how government responds and I'm really thankful for that long period of ‑ longitudinal work that our prevention networks have done. It's really set the tone and the ask, I think, and the accountability back on government because it's based in such great evidence‑based work.

The targeted elder abuse prevention project in bushfire affected communities of East Gippsland - really important work and the continued work, as I said, around creating real change through that elder abuse prevention networks.

The example of what's possible through that collaboration is of course a framing age message guide and I had the pleasure ‑ can't believe the time flies by ‑ to attend the launch of that back in October last year.

It was a project of the southern Melbourne PCP included four other elder abuse prevention networks and it was possible through that engagement of Common Cause Australia which we'll hear about today. The guide does give us the tools and support change, the conversation around age and the challenges of ageism. Fantastic to have Mark with us today and to share about the guide and how do you apply these things in practice, how do you bring these things to life. That's going to be a really important conversation.

I want to thank everyone for joining this forum this morning. It is important work and there are more and more Victorians every day who are touched by this work, who have lived experience and who we can work together to understand those stories, put it into practice and apply better ageing well lens for many more people who are approaching that stage in their life and their families and friends and a broader awareness in our communities about what that means to have an accountability to make ageing well something, not just to embrace and look forward to as another part of your life and where you make a contribution, but to understand what responsibilities the rest of the community has to make that effective and a valued part of peoples contribution in community.

Thanks again Josh and to everyone online for the opportunity to join you this morning. I'm looking forward to hearing our panel discussions and I want to thank everyone for their continued application to this work to drive it through evidence‑led work and practice that's helping us frame up our policies and contributions and commitment around this work and the conversations that we need to be able to have with more people in the community about why it's so important to understand it; and to drive not just across the work that we've done across Royal Commissions and family violence with Minister Williams and others in our government, but to understand the broader effective that has around elder abuse and the role that we need to play there.

You all be part of it and I thank you very much and look forward to hearing more of the work that we can do together today. Thanks again Josh.

**Mr Josh Bull, Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Parliamentary Secretary for Carers and Volunteers:** Thanks very much Minister Carbines for those words and of course your commitment to this really important area. It is now my pleasure to pass to Gerard Mansour the Commissioner for senior Victorians and ambassador for elder abuse prevention and I'm sure all of you are very familiar with Gerard and the wonderful work he does. Gerard I'm going to pass over to you now. Thanks so much.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thank you Josh for that lovely warm welcome and thank you Minister Carbines for your opening comments. I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we're all joining this event today and I'd like to pay my respects to their elders past and present. I extend that respect to any Aboriginal elders and Aboriginal people that are with us today and we're privileged to have them online with us. I'd like to also acknowledge that today is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and I have the pleasure in the capacity that I have as ambassador of elder abuse prevention to bring to your attention two very important videos launched recently by Respect Victoria as a part of their elder abuse prevention campaign.

I was delighted in my conversations with CEO Emily Maguire to co‑sign an information bulletin that Respect Victoria sent out to bring these videos to the attention of all stakeholders. I've had the pleasure of seeing them on television, I've heard them on the radio, and the work of Respect Victoria is just so central to us doing what we all want to do which is preventing elder abuse from occurring in the first place. So I've got great pleasure without further ado to bring to your attention these two videos. So We're just going to show the videos one after another so you get a chance to yourselves see first hand the important work of Respect Victoria in terms of prevention of elder abuse.

\*\* video’s played....

**Gerard Mansour:** So I'd really encourage you all to embrace the campaign, have conversations, access the Respect Victoria website and please do the thing that's just most important, let's continue to work as a community to eradicate the scourge of elder abuse. So I've now great pleasure to introduce Mark Chenery from Common Cause Australia. Mark is a communications expert and trainer who works with social and environmental organisations to incorporate an evidence‑based approach to values framing. His background includes work in advertising, journalism and social justice campaigning before establishing Common Cause Australia in 2014. A big welcome to you Mark.

**Mr Mark Chenery, Common Cause Australia:** Thanks Gerard. Good morning everyone. So last year we were approached to conduct some message research by the southern Melbourne primary care partnership and a group of organisations they were working with on the primary prevention of elder abuse. Now given that ageism is a primary driver of elder abuse the message research brief for us was to develop and test messages that reduce ageist attitudes.

Now from this research we have produced the framing age message guide and you can read all about what I'm talking about today in that guide, and if you want to look at the research methodology in detail you can do so too, but just really briefly, the research that we conducted involved four different stages. We started off with some interviews with advocates, so people who are personally passionate about elder abuse or ageism or issues affecting older people.

We then conducted public discourse analysis to understand how do Australians more broadly think and talk about age, ageing and older people. We then conducted message testing to explore with a nationally representative group of people which messages actually shift the dial, which messages actually reduce ageist attitudes in the community.

Finally we conducted workshops with people working on various issues including elder abuse and ageism to understand what they thought were the key insights from that research that we should be putting together into our message guide and of course in the end we wrote and produced and published the framing age message guide which is freely available for everyone to access.

So What did we find? One of the key things that we were looking for in this research that we wanted to understand is what ‑ to what extent does the Australian population already support or oppose actions to address ageism, and what we found actually is that we've got about a quarter of the population, so one in four people who are deeply in our corner.

These are people, these are what we call or supporters, they are people who already agree that ageism is a serious problem in our community and also they supported pretty much every solution that we threw at them from media representation to government policy to individual behaviour change and change within the business community. And the way in which we define support is that they cannot be convinced otherwise.

So they are deeply, deeply in our corner and no‑one can tell them otherwise which is brilliant news for us. However on the other hand we've got a group of people out there in the community who we classify as the opposition. These are people who range from holding quite hostile attitudes towards older people, they, for example, would believe that older people lives matter less than other peoples lives, right through to people who are literally indifferent to older people, so they don't care if older people do well and they don't care if they do poorly, and they certainly don't support us wasting time and energy on something like an ageism campaign.

But in between we have a whole bunch of Australians who we classified as persuadable, people who by our definition could both see the supporter perspective on this issue, but also unfortunately also see the opposition perspective, and this is the group of people that we really need to reach in our communications, and everything that you'll see in the framing age message guide is about how to toggle that persuadable audience into a supporter frame of mind and avoiding as much as we can toggling them into an opposition frame of mind, saying and doing things that might actually activate some of those unhelpful ideas that are sitting there in the background.

So there are lots of tips and recommendations and sample messages in the framing age guide but I'm just going to share with you three this morning then we're going to talk about what that looks like in practice.

My first recommendation is to use values not facts to persuade. It doesn't mean you can't talk about facts, but it's not the facts that do the heavy lifting for us. It's not the facts that convince people or that changes peoples’ minds, in particular persuadable people.

Now I wish that people were rational. I wish that they lived up to this ideal of being the thinkers that we wade up all the facts and figures at our disposal in order to arrive at logical conclusions about how we should think and act in any one moment, but the reality is that at least 95 per cent of human thought happens below the level of conscious awareness which means that the vast majority of the time our thinking, our attitudes as well as our behaviour is influenced much more by how we feel about the different options before us. So the question then becomes how do we influence how people feel? One of the things that we can do is tap into values. So there are at least three decades worth of excellent research on how values influence peoples attitudes and behaviours.

I'm just going to start sharing my slides at this point so you can see what I'm talking about. We know that values have a really important influence in driving different types of attitudes; what we know is that a group of values which is self‑direction, universalism and benevolence values are associated in general with a whole range of pro social and environmental attitudes and behaviours. These values include things like choosing your own goals in life, freedom, creativity, social justice, equality, broad mindedness, as well as things like responsibility and loyalty, love and helpfulness.

When we engage any of these values it brings with it all of the helpful attitudes and behaviour you see listed on the slide at the moment. In particular I want to draw your attention to tolerance and acceptance and human rights. So when we engage these values in people, including through our messaging, repeated research from around the world shows it increases peoples’ likelihood to think and act in more tolerant and accepting ways towards people who are different to them, but also to believe in human rights and equality.

Now on the other hand what we also know from this research is that when people are driven by achievement and power values, so things like concern around their individual status or wealth or competition with others, how successful or intelligent they are in comparison to others, it brings out a whole bunch of anti‑social and environmentally destructive behaviours. In particular what's interesting is it brings out a whole range of discriminatory attitudes and behaviour. The research shows everything from nationalism to homophobia, racism anti-immigrant sentiment, sexism as well as ageism is increased when these values are engaged in people.

This academic research was absolutely reinforced by our own research here and what we found was that our supporters are unusually strong in their altruistic values. They are unusually driven by helpfulness, honesty, loyalty and equality.

The opposite is true of the opposition, the people we had classified as opposition turned out to be unusually strong on their individualistic and competitive values. What this tells us is that if we want to toggle our persuadable audience who are capable of both mindsets into a supporter frame of mind then we absolutely need to lean into these altruistic and self‑direction values. I'm going to show you a couple of the messages that were some of the most successful messages we tested. Firstly I'll explain to you what you're about to see.

This is one of our dial messages which is an audio recorded message which, as people were listening to the message on their computer, at home they could dial up and down on their screen to indicate the level of agreement with what they were hearing in each moment. You're going to see three different lines. You're going to see a line representing the supporters in green, a yellow line for persuadable and a red line for the opposition. Now we obviously want the supporters and persuadable to love the message. We want to see them dialling up. And we want to see them dialling up in equal measure.

Persuadables will always be below supporters, but we want them following the same trend. We want to see counter intuitively from the opposition is for them to feel a bit uncomfortable with the message. That he is not because we want to annoy our opposition on purpose but because if they like our message then our message is not clear because we know these people from the rest of our survey are very hostile towards older people and the idea of doing ageism‑related work. Let's have a look at this message which is very much framed in terms of people being able to choose things for themselves.

**Example on screen:** Whether we are 17 or 70 we all crave the freedom to make our own choices but as we get older people assume they can make decisions for us, whether it's our children telling us what we should do with our money or carers in nursing homes choosing what time we wake up in the morning or what brand of toothpaste we use. We might lose many things over the course of our lives but never the desire to make our own choices. Respecting someone's humanity means listening to and supporting their wishes no matter their age.

**Mark Chenery:** This is a powerful message for persuadeables once we start talking about solutions. I'll show you another of the top performing messages and this one instead of being focused on choices and sort of self‑direction is much more focused on the concept of equality.

**Example on screen:** Everyone should be treated equally no matter their race, gender or age and while our community is beginning to recognise the injustices of racism and sexism the prejudice many of you still don't see is ageism from the way older people are ignored by shop assistants to the ageist jokes in birthday cards. Age‑based discrimination is surprisingly common but that doesn't make it right. If we want to create a more equal society we need to ensure people of all ages are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

**Mark Chenery:** So that's some of the values that we want to be engaging in our communication. Let's have a look at a tip number 2, for you this morning is to emphasise similarities not differences.

Now the key barrier to empathy is when we start to create artificial divides between people, between us and them, and unfortunately a lot of the time people who are working on age‑related issues, whether that is elder abuse or ageism more broadly, we unnecessarily draw a line around people based on their age and constantly bring people attention to it and we literally talk about older people as if they are a different group of people to just standard people.

Now one of our recommendations is to just say people instead of older people where the term older people is irrelevant. This is an example of that. This service was set up to support older people who are experiencing or at risk of elder abuse. Now from the context you really could have just said people. Another example of this, the number of elder people in residential aged care with complex health conditions is rising. Again, from the context we really could have just said people. If you want to lean into this idea of raising the divisions between us as much as possible in your communication another way to do that is to use inclusive language, talk about us and our and we instead of them, older people, the elderly.

This might look like this, so this is a classic sort of unintentionally othering statement: it's the government's moral duty to make sure elderly people can stay safe at home in control of their own lives for as long as possible, and that if older people do need residential care, they have control over what happens. Look what happens when we use the more inclusive, we/us/our: it's the government's moral duty to make sure we can stay at home in control of our own lives for as long as possible and if we do need residential care, we have control over what happens. So, the meaning is identical, but the feeling is a little bit different, and it does make a substantial difference to the way in which persuadable people think and it brings us them into our fold. It helps them see the issue more from our perspective.

My third tip for you is not to myth bust, to repeat your story instead. Now as experts there is nothing that feels more right or more satisfying than correcting myths. If people are saying things, we know aren't true and we have all the evidence to show that it's not true we want to just wade into it and tell them how they're wrong. Unfortunately, when we myth bust research shows we myth build. We actually strengthen the very neural networks for the ideas we are trying to dispel. We're effectively reminding people of ideas we wish they would forget. What does myth busting look like in practice? We found literal by dozens of these in the discourse analysis we did.

Often looks like this, myth #6; younger workers are more dynamic, entrepreneurial, and tech savvy than older worker. Reality, older people have a lot to offer the modern workplace. What we're doing here is we're actually building the concepts, strengthening these ideas around younger people being more dynamic, entrepreneur, tech savvy which is unhelpful. Myth busting doesn't always look like classic myth busting it’s sometime look like this, serious mental decline is not a normal part of ageing, most forgetfulness is not Alzheimer’s and 20 percent of people in their 90s escape cognitive decline entirely. What we are doing here is reinforcing all of these associations with mental decline in older people.

So, what do you do? You don't myth bust what do you do with myths? You actually ‑ difficult advice to take but you ignore them. Instead of telling people what you don't want to think you focus on telling them what you do want to think. A really quick example of what this might look like in practice. Here is a combination example. This is showing you a collated example of the sort of things people often talk about in elder abuse.

Elder abuse is any act which causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust. Research from Australia and overseas shows that a growing number of older people are experiencing elder abuse. Often this abuse takes the form of not allowing the elderly to make their own choices.

You might for example assume older relatives are no longer able to make decisions for themselves or are too stubborn for their own good, but if you're caring for an older person or denying them the right to make their own choices this could be elder abuse. To find out more visit.

Tip number 1 use values not facts. This leads with facts, and this is what we tend to do. It tells you the technical definition of elder abuse and tells you some research about the prevalence of it.

Tip number 2 is to not create artificial divisions between people.

This is very much constantly referring to them, the elderly, older people and so on, and tip number 3 which is not to myth bust and you might have noticed in that second paragraph we're talking about people not being able to make decisions for themselves and being too stubborn for their own good. One more slide for you today and that is what this might look like if we applied the recommendations.

What we are 17 or 70 we all grave the freedom to make our own choices in life, but as we get older some people assume they can make decisions for us, whether it's our children telling us what we should do our money or a carer choosing who we are allowed to see or where we can go. Respecting someone’s humanity means listening to and supporting their wishes, no matter their age. We might lose many things over the course of our lives, but never the desire to make our own decisions or choices. If you're caring for an older person, make sure you respect their right to make their own choices. For more information about treating older people with respect and dignity visit.

So, just those three tips really quickly again, tip number 1 use values not facts. This leads with a very clear values proposition. This is about people having the freedom to make their own choices in life. Tip number 2 emphasise similarities not differences. Here we are using for the most part inclusive language, so we/us/ours. We only use older people where we need to make the distinction very clear, where it is necessary. Finally, not myth busting. We have not activated any of those really unhelpful myths that we know we don't want to have people thinking about instead we've simply told our story clearly.

That's it. I really encourage you to check out the message guide and to think about your own communications and how applying these tips can actually help you be better advocates for an important issue. Thank you.

**Josh Bull:** Thank you so much Mark. That was a really incredible keynote and some really important information that was shared with the group, so thank you not just for your presentation this morning, but for all of the work that you do. It's very widely known and respected, so thank you so much.

It's some fascinating work. I did want to take the opportunity to ask a question if I may and that relates to ‑ you spoke quite extensively about addressing ageism and I think what we all know and understand is that it takes quite a lot of concerted effort within the community to maintain the momentum, to be able to keep the understanding and awareness of ageism within the community and indeed to have people be taking practical steps to address ageism. I wanted to ask if I could on behalf of the group how do you think that that momentum can be sustained and what are the practical steps that we can do within our local communities in that space?

**Mark Chenery:** Look, I approach these things very much from both a messaging perspective and a values perspective and one of the things that we often do, and it sort of relates to that third tip around myth busting, is that we too easily feel like we need to deconstruct the unhelpful ideas before we can start creating better ones and what I hope people take away from the message guide and reading through it is that there is a whole bunch of great stuff there in the community already. It is simply a matter of bringing it out.

It is helping people see ageism for what it is and to understand how that violates their deeply held shared values. I don't actually believe that there is ‑ that it is necessarily a job of persuading people that ageism matters. It's just reminding them that it does and why they should care. So, I think our efforts should be about having the conversation and making sure that we are absolutely sticking to our story, telling people why it matters to us personally more often than not rather than necessarily trying to address myths or deconstruct unhelpful understandings of what it means to age or be older.

**Josh Bull:** Thank you, Mark, thank you to common cause and for everyone's work and for the presentation for the keynote. We are to the minute on time which is quite surprising, and I do need to apologise if people can hear some construction next to my house here in Sunbury. I've got some neighbours having some work done.

I should just note that if there's any sound issues, that's what that is. It's now my pleasure to hand back to Gerard for our first panel discussion on translating the guide to practise. We've got some terrific panel members with us this morning so Gerard I will hand back to you for this section of our agenda.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thank you very much for that Josh. What a wonderful presentation Mark. Thank you very much for that. I should have also said Josh you've got these headsets on because I live opposite a school, and I don't want the bells going all the time. People might think someone's going to come and arrest me. Apologies that I have to wear this head set but I thought it's good for you not to have to hear the bells all the time.

Look, I'm delighted to say our first panel discussion is going to focus on the experiences of our panel members who through their professional work and in their lives more generally have been applying the framing age message guide into practice.

I'm delighted to be joined by Michelle Lord, executive officer of Southern Melbourne primary care partnership, Cathy Horsley team leader, community building in the City of Port Phillip, Kate Gibson, manager primary prevention and education, Eastern Community Legal Centre, and Dilnaz Billimoria, community legal representative and volunteer with Eastern Community Legal Centre. A warm welcome to you all.

A reminder to all those viewing if you would like to ask a question to the panel, please just submit that via Slido and we'll get to as many questions as we can.

So, panellists I've got a couple of questions for you today and to keep us on a time limit we're going to keep to a limit of our answers. We're going to aim for three minutes for the first question. We're going to go through in a particular order. We'll go through the same order which will be Michelle, Cathy, Kate and then Dilnaz. Starting with you Michelle, could you tell us what motivated you to translate the framing age message guide to practise and what has been maybe an unexpected opportunity or challenge so far? Keen to get what motivated you and something that might have been an unexpected opportunity or challenge. Over to you thanks very much, Michelle.

**Michelle Lord:** Thanks Gerard. I think as the leading agency involved in developing the guide, we were really committed from the beginning to see what could evolve to support our shared goal of addressing ageism and as Mark has already explained we recognised that we needed evidence‑based resource to help us address ageism in our community.

On top of that it had taken a long time for our network to develop a good understanding of primary prevention. Many of our members don't have a background in that type of approach so a resource that helps us all put into practice ways of addressing the drivers of elder abuse was really essential for us. So given that we had made the commitment to develop the guide in the first place it was a natural progression for us to start translating it into practice.

So, my team at southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership had had some previous experience in using values‑based messaging so I think we're probably a bit quicker at pausing and reflecting whether or not we're applying the guide principles or whether, you know, message meets the particular brief, but we still need to very often run things past each other to see if we're on the right track. It's definitely something that takes plenty of practice.

For example, when we were developing web pages to promote the message guide, we started out writing, as we would have ordinarily, and then we said hang on, wait a minute, no we should be applying the principles in the guide when we're writing this content.

So, we took a step back, took a bit more time with the text and make sure that it reflected the type of methodology behind developing that content and made sure we made good use of all the tips that Mark's included in there. After that we started to review some of the other resources, generally advocacy resources that we had developed and we found that we needed to update them because we had used a lot of myth-busting. We'd emphasised the scale of ageism and we'd focused on stereotypes where we shouldn't have, so we're far from expert, but we're learning all the time.

In terms of unexpected opportunities there's been lots so I'll just mention a few. On a local level it's been really fantastic to see network members embrace the framing age message guide and build capacity within their own organisations to apply it. Particularly with their communications teams., a lot of them have participated in masterclass training sessions with Mark and that's then informed both their internal and external communications, and they've also in larger organisations extended that to other departments that have contact with older people as well as to senior leadership groups.

Some of our local government members have used the guide to inform their policy development as well as their event planning and promotion and to educate their councillors, so they're using it in a variety of ways. Branching out a bit further in terms of opportunity the guide has now been incorporated into the every age counts advocate training modules which helps advocates from all walks of life to apply those principles in their activities and finally one of the most unexpected opportunities from my perspective so far was being interviewed for a feature article in the Canadian journal called International Council on Active Ageing, so as a project that started out to develop an evidence‑based resource to help us tackle ageism locally we're really pleased to see the national and international reach it's achieved so far and hope that that will contribute to real long‑term change.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks very much Michelle. My congratulations too to the great initiative in getting it together. Just a little thing I've done, I've reviewed every one of my PowerPoint presentations to make sure the language I use as Commissioner fits with that. Thank you very much for the initiative of pushing this really important piece of work over the hill. Cathy, over to you and then to Kate and Dilnaz.

**Cathy Horsley:** Thanks Gerard. So, I just wanted to talk a little bit about how the guide has been a really practical tool for me to advocate how council communicates, particularly around that idea of emphasising similarities rather than differences, so working with council teams, communications teams, event producers, also volunteer involving organisations and carer recognition groups.

So historically the needs of older people sort of compared to the rest of us has been often the way that our messaging has been framed, internal and external stakeholders, so the guide has just provided a really practical tool to advocate for new ways of how we frame that message.

Involvement in the network has given me really great language and confidence to champion positive ageing and to sort of open up the topic also of elder abuse in all aspects of my work as a community builder, and particularly the work I do with the council, the city of Port Phillip's Older Persons’ Advisory Committee which is a committee of 16 highly motivated individuals who do inform a lot of the work that council does, particularly with an emphasis on issues that, as they would say, affect older people.

So, working closely with them on initiatives of ageism awareness sessions of which we're going to roll one out this morning as part of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. We're going to roll those sessions out to all staff across various teams, also the council executive including the mayor and councillors and some of our special advisory groups.

It's been an interesting process working with the older persons advisory committee to co‑design the ageism awareness sessions and there have been some tensions around their desire to use facts to actually myth-bust and that they are very keen to have some facts embedded in the presentation to drive home the message to facts that will potentially address stereotypes and they do consider this a powerful tool. It's been really interesting working on a co‑design process with the members of the Older Persons’ Advisory Committee who are actually presenting the ageism sessions, and as I have said have co‑designed them. They're sort of building in their personal narratives but they're also really hanging on to the idea and keen on still using statistics to bust myths. That's just been a really interesting process.

As I said we're about to roll out our first community session, our ageism awareness session this morning at 11 o'clock here at St Kilda town hall and we are looking forward to bringing the work of the Older Persons Advisory Committee very much informed by the message guide and the work I've done with the network to a community group and then to get their feedback. Thank you.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thank you very much for that explanation. If I could now call for Kate. Thank you, Kate.

**Kate Gibson:**  Yes, so for us this guide is a really important part of our journey in building a toolkit of ways that we can help to prevent elder abuse from occurring. I think as a centre we know pretty well how to respond and intervene early through our health justice partnerships and other projects, but preventing it is actually really quite different.

We live in a society that is largely ageist and this work is part of long‑term investment to challenge this cultural norms and attitudes. This also means that the message guide is really useful for all of our communications across the population so that we're part of a narrative shift around ageing. This is not just about working with older people, but across our populations.

Before we had this guide we learnt fairly early on that the concept of ageism just didn't resonate with community members and it made it quite difficult for us to engage with community around the topic in a meaningful way. So, we do see this guide as a tool to enhance the work that we're already doing by just increasing the usefulness of our communications when we talk about ageing.

Our experience has been it's not actually so easy to put into practice and it doesn't always come naturally. So, what we've found is for us it's been important to just put aside some time to enable us to put this lens over specific pieces of work that we're doing. We recently used this method to help us with the planning and delivery of a WEAAD event that we held with our partners Maroondah Council and Women’s Health East and the results were really, really positive and thanks to my colleague Jill we've taken to calling this the “Chenerising” process. Mark I hope you don't mind we've turned your name into a verb. Yes, we “Chenerised” our presentation. We focused on a few things in our language, avoiding past mistakes such as myth busting and scaring our audience with numbers and overwhelming statistics. We also avoided unnecessary othering age groups by referring to older people unless it was really needed.

And when we've had these conversations, I think the interesting thing is it's quite surprising how little we actually do need to say older people as Mark was talking about earlier. We really don't lose the message by doing that. I think the benefit of this is it really allowed community to engage in a topic in a very positive way. Even though the subject matter at the event was at times heavy, the event felt good and had a really good vibe and was really successful in engaging our community members who were present.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks very much Kate. We're going to all remember that new verb, to “Chenerise”. Thank you for that inspiration. A good reminder for us all. Now over to Dilnaz for your contribution thanks Dilnaz

**Dilnaz Billimoria:** Thanks Gerard. I think my role here is wearing the multicultural, multi‑faith hat for CALD communities which are the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities across Victoria and not working in the sector but in fact being a volunteer at grassroots has really helped me to take the values messaging guide and implement it into different communities and different issues within the community, not just ageism or elder abuse.

I thought I would actually share a good example of this. So, we wanted to do a forum for the prevention of family violence and elder abuse in faith communities. And when we put that title across it was like we had drawn a white sheet across the invitation. Nobody wanted to attend because nobody wanted to acknowledge that there was family violence or elder abuse in their faith and cultural communities. We looked at Mark Chenery's work and we looked at the guide and with a lot of collaboration and consultation and co‑design we changed the title to unite for safety and respect.

And having done that and looked at the emotional positive, empathetic messaging, we found that not only were people interested to attend the event, but they didn't want just one event, they wanted an event across a year. So right through we did a number of forums, workshops, seminars to get people to talk about these difficult subjects and to accept that there is elder abuse, ageism and family violence in their faith and cultural communities.

So this was a really good example for us to actually take a guide and take the values within it. You know in terms of the othering, not to point to people so there's no name and shame involved, there's no finger pointing and blame involved we're taking everyone with us on this journey of positive imaging, of safety and respect in your communities, and really worked well.

Thanks Kate. I am going to “Chenerise” it in future. I think as a community representative talking to many in the sector here from government to Local Government to agencies, we do need to put ourselves in the choose of our audience. Once we do that, whether it's the multicultural communities, the people who are facing violence, the perpetrators, especially across migrant platforms once we put ourselves in the shoes and what is my favourite term we look out for the “hardly reached” communities, we don't straight away say it's hard to reach and kind of take it off the screen, but we look at the “hardly reached” communities, the marginalised communities. I think the mess ageing guide really works for everyone. Thanks Gerard.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks Dilnaz. Dilnaz I've got a question here from the audience. We've just got a couple of quick minutes to go through it. How difficult or challenging was it for you to get the support of the multicultural, multi‑faith community to be engaged in this sort of dialogue.

**Dilnaz Billimoria:** As Kate referred to earlier, initially when we took the stance of saying that there is family violence in your communities and there is elder abuse in your communities, and everybody knows that there is, we came across a brick wall. But the moment we used the concepts of the guide, so we explained to people that we want to include everyone so there was no othering, that we're looking at empathy and respect for everyone, that we want everyone in the community to stay safe, I'm really proud to say, and this project was in the Eastern region, that we had faith leaders, cultural leaders, community representatives, everyone walking this difficult journey with us. So as I once again repeat that we need to listen to what the community needs and then use the messaging guide to put the message across in a way that's acceptable to all.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks very much Dilnaz. Michelle can I call on you to add to that? Setting this work in process how did you find that in terms of engaging with the community? We've just got a couple of quick minutes that we can allocate to finish off the question.

**Michelle Lord:** I guess for us and the nature of our organisation is that we engage more with professionals rather than directly with community, so we engage with community through professionals and I guess for us it's been, you know, a situation where because we haven't had a resource like this previously it's something that people have been really willing to take on board and it's almost had a bit of a domino effect where people have heard about it, have seen the value in it and that has spread. So that people want to get engaged more, so we've been very fortunate that it's just had the amazing uptake that it has.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thank you very much all our panelists. We're now going back around the panel. You've each got a minute and I would like to, in your minute, invite you to give a key take‑away to our audience today in considering why and how they can apply their framing ‑ the framing age message guide to their work and their practice and the people that they work with. Back to you Michelle and then Cathy, Kate and Dilnaz. Your one minute.

**Michelle Lord**: Thank you. I think for me the key take‑away would be that the guide is based on really sound evidence and that values‑based messaging is a more effective way to influence people’s attitudes and behaviours. We know from the research that Mark's just presented that every time we communicate a message or an idea about age, ageing and the issues that affect older people, we've got that potential to positively influence 60 per cent of our audience. So that means that we can turn those persuadable people into supporters and they can also then share our message. I think it would be fairly safe to say that most people online this morning would consider themselves to be an advocate, so that means that you're all part of the supporter camp, I would hope. So if we could all join together in applying the framing age message guide we can have an enormous collective impact on the ageist attitudes and behaviours that act as drivers of elder abuse. So considering that we've only relatively recently begun addressing ageism I think it's critical that we use the most effective methods available to us so we can increase the number of people who support our messages. Over to you Cathy.

**Cathy Horsley:** Thank you. I think that the way that council communicates with the community is a huge part of council business, whether it's the website, whether it's campaigns to change policies or update procedures or changes to council business, whether it's the council plan and budget, whether it's online council meetings or whether it's any kind of communications that occur to the constituents. it's a huge piece of work that the council does so I think that the guide is a really important tool and a great way for people to become more aware, engaged and educated about how to frame age in a positive way and to communicate better with the whole community. Thank you.

**Gerard Mansour**: Thanks very much Cathy. Kate?

**Kate Gibson**: Look I think when you read the guide and, or do the workshop and look at it it completely makes sense, but it doesn't necessarily become easy or instinct to do it straight away. I think be patient with yourself. Doing something is better than doing nothing. Take small bites if you can and just give it a try.

**Gerard Mansour**: Thanks Kate. And Dilnaz?

**Dilnaz Billimoria**: I just wanted to quickly say that as part of this messaging there is something called vision, barriers and action, and when we look at any project in the community as a grassroots volunteer this is really helped me to understand what is the vision that we want people to be young irrespective of their age, you know, in their mind. What are the barriers, society, community etc, and what is the action, and one very quick one, and I'm going to do it even though I'm on a high level event today. A senior citizens group in the east came up with this as part of the values messaging guide. They decided they're going to be called YAH, which is young at heart, and the action was YAH, which is very part of, you know, the community and being young and contribute re. It was a simple guide that I took to them and after some sessions we've come up with YAH. I thought that was a really good way of showing a vision, a barrier and the action at the end. Thanks Gerard.

**Gerard Mansour:** YAH to you Dilnaz. Big thanks for Michelle, Cathy, Kate and Dilnaz. Without any further ado I've got great pleasure now moving on to our second panel.

I would like to introduce Carla Wilkie who is the elder abuse liaison officer at Western Health, and it's representing the integrated model of care in that area today, Marnie Coglan, the helpline advocate of Seniors Rights Victoria, senior sergeant Alasdair Gall, family violence command at Victoria Police and Jenni Dickson executive director community support services at Better Place Australia.

Welcome panel number 2 and a warm welcome to you. We've got on this panel now to consider a case study. For our audience, you should have a chance to, as we go through, see a summary slide of what I'm just about to summarise on the screen for you to have a look at. I'm going to quickly run through the case study then I'm going to invite our panel members to make a comment in response to our questions and remember you're welcome to put any questions you've got into Slido. Our case study today concerns a mother whose adult son has moved into her home after the breakdown of his marriage.

As we all know that's a very common scenario isn't it, where an adult child moves back into the family home. He's since taken control of her finances, reduced her existing home care services, uses her car most days and has restricted when she can access common areas of her home like the lounge and kitchen areas.

Remaining support workers have observed the mother seems withdrawn when her son is present and he has at times referred to her as hopeless and stupid. She told support workers her son just gets frustrated with how much he has to do for me. Her daughter lives at a distance and has expressed concerns around her mum's safety and wellbeing. Neighbours called police after they hear the son threatening his mum. When the police attend they find her distressed and with visible injuries consistent with physical assault. She says her son hit and pushed her causing her to fall. Paramedics are called and the mother is transferred to primary healthcare for review.

Just so our audience knows, this is a case study based on real life example that we're dealing with here.

Panellists, first question for you, and again the same as last time, giving you each three minutes for the first question and then we'll come back to an audience questions and then do a wrap‑up at the end. I'm going to go through the order of Carla, Marnie, Alasdair and Jenni. My first question is this for you Carla. Recognising there will be different touch points for the older person or concerned family and friends, how would your service respond and what other services will it engage with to support the older person? And would that differ depending on the geographic location if it was in a regional area? Welcome to you Carla.

**Carla** **Wilkie**: Thanks Gerard. Firstly the service that elder abuse liaison officers provide is primarily secondary consultation when workers or clinicians suspect, witness or there is a disclosure of elder abuse. And secondary consultation is an important part of best practice response in these sorts of situations, and only takes a small amount of time to unpack and consider together what the most suitable options are to support clients.

With this particular case secondary consultation could have been provided by a liaison officer to support workers or their manager when they identified the client's change in living circumstances. So when the client's son moved into the home there may have been heightened awareness of some concerns with the workers or when the workers first became aware of the adult son's concerning behaviour.

So for example when they observed his disparaging comments towards the client, that might result in a call to us for advice. The liaison officer's advice may have been geared towards strategies to assess and mitigate the risk of abuse and also to provide ‑ to assist service providers to support the client, and the service staff may have also been encouraged to undertake some elder abuse training as well.

When the client went to hospital the healthcare staff could have also reached out to liaison officers for secondary consultation and we may have recommended something like elder abuse, informed therapeutic counselling or financial counselling or perhaps a referral to the Orange Door for a family violence flexible support package. Also there may have been indications for referral to Seniors Rights Victoria for specific advocacy or legal support, and if the client was a recipient of a commonwealth‑funded service an elder rights advocate may have been of interest to them as well.

I guess secondary consultation could also be accessed from workers at the Orange Door and Victoria Police as well with us at the liaison office. We can offer extra options for support and advice around aged care services, counselling, specialised outreach supports and other services to meet the needs of the older person and other involved people as well. In regional areas the service response would be similar, but is perhaps in some instances may be affected by other complexities. So, for example, older people in regional areas might experience greater socialisation, they may have less access to services more broadly, and they might have less access to face‑to‑face services which can perhaps result in a greater dependence on others for assistance and potentially a higher risk.

Some people in regional Victoria may also have some difficulty accessing elder abuse informed services or a GP and in smaller communities we have heard narratives that older people might have fears associated with the person who is using violence or the perpetrator potentially finding out about their disclosure of abuse as well. So in a service system that can feel a bit fragmented, liaison officers aim to be the link between service providers and support options that they may not be aware of.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks very much Carla. You mentioned that part of the considerations would be a potential referral to Seniors Rights Victoria, so Marnie if I could bring you in on that one, how would Seniors Rights Victoria respond in this type of a case study?

**Marnie Coghlan**: Thank you Gerard. Seniors Rights Victoria is a specialist community legal centre set up to work specifically in the elder abuse space. We have two main sort of service areas directly to people who are experiencing abuse. One is our helpline. We have the state‑wide helpline and we're also the contact for the national 1800 elder help number. So anyone calling that number within Victoria is automatically transferred to us as well. At the helpline we're able to provide information and support referral information and advice to anyone who is concerned or has questions about elder abuse.

So in the example, in the case example that we just saw, we may have received calls from the victim survivor's daughter who was living elsewhere but concerned and wanting to know strategies and supports. We may have heard from the neighbours who often feel really disempowered when they're hearing these things and they're not sure what to do. We may have heard from the aged care people who had their services reduced and were concerned because we do a secondary consultation process for workers as well, and of course most importantly we may have heard from the victim survivor themselves.

We have a case work team, so we're part of a community legal service, so we have lawyers and non‑legal advocates who can provide free advice and case work to victim survivors themselves, and are able to talk them through their rights, their legal options and a whole range of other non‑legal pathways that might be available to them to solve that. So in this situation we could have had a number of touchpoints along the way with a whole range of different people. We try to ‑ because we're state‑wide, have a good sense of what might be available for people in different areas, noting that the services do vary depending on the region that the victim survivor lives in to what they would be able to access.

So within regional areas there is often a different type of problem solving about who to find. There sometimes isn't the same level of services, although with Orange Doors rolling out state‑wide that has certainly assisted, but it's trying to know what is local for them, what is going to work best for them. We're always trying to work with people about who are their people of trust who are the support services around them so that that sense of collaboration can occur. We know from the prevalence study that was released late last year that a person experiencing elder abuse is most likely to start to seek support from family members and non‑professionals around them So it's sort of important here at the helpline that we try and assist those people to find the pathways even if we can't intervene directly ourselves because they're not the person directly impacted, but that we can actually provide them with some tools and referral pathways for them to move forward with that.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thank you very much for that summary Marnie. Clearly Alasdair, Victoria Police are at the front line of the response here, so over to you thanks Alasdair

**Alasdair Gall:** Thanks Gerard. I think maybe the batting order maybe a little bit skew whiff because we'd probably be the first on scene and our main job would be to ensure the safety of all parties, but in particular the victim. So our police would separate the parties, ascertain what's happened given the scenario it would probably be fairly obvious what's happened. We’d complete a family violence report, known as an L17, and given the circumstances of the incident it would be classified as a formal referral. And a formal referral would go through via the L17 portal for dissemination to the Orange Door or in areas where the Orange Door isn't operating yet, and it wouldn't be too much of Victoria it's not covered by the Orange Door, the main support agencies for that particular area.

On the family violence report the police record any factors that may assist support agencies, particularly that of the victim, any disabilities such as hearing, sight, could even be language barriers, mobility, etc, just to give a background. And also at the scene the police would also be gathering evidence of what's taken place and also reflect that in the referral narrative to give these support agencies a good start in determining what supports may come in. To support the victim and the daughter we would obviously contact the daughter to inform them of what's happened and in this particular scenario police would be interviewing the son for criminal assault matters and certainly taking out in the first instance a family violence safety notice with an exclusion condition to separate the parties and place them obligations on his behaviour and protect the older person.

As far as continued follow up, more particularly I think in the first instance would be with the daughter given the victim's obviously going to be shaken up and maybe not remember exactly what's said in a very stressful time. We would inform them of the civil action that's been taken and the criminal action contemplated and the disposition of what has occurred with that, and also advise them when they do go to court Victoria Police has a family violence court liaison officer at all the major magistrates courts and we would guide them to that family violence court liaison officer who would be informed of the situation through our internal processes. The court liaison officer would be able to explain to the victim, if they're able to come to court or the family member who no doubt would come to court to support her mum, of the services such as Seniors Rights Victoria, Legal Aid, Orange Door and my former area Eastern Community Legal Service. So from that point of view the court liaison officer is pivotal in assisting members. Then as we go through the process both in criminal and civil matters we would be contacting the victim and the family support member to let them know when the hearings are taking place and where we are in the process. But to also assist our members, because obviously our first responders deal with a lot of different incidents.

We have developed a specific elder abuse practice guide which is available on our intranet in conjunction with Seniors Rights Victoria a few years ago There was a specific elder abuse video on our police learning hub and also we have 21, one for each police division, family violence training officers which can assist members and more particularly our family violence liaison officers. Any nuances or assistance they may need in this particular theme of family violence. In a rural setting our response would be similar, as was said before, but actually getting to the location given isolation factors in some areas will be determined by distance etc, but obviously given the circumstances we would be there as soon as we possibly can. Just for the audience’s information, any family violence incident that's reported and allocated out for investigation to the front line unit a supervisor is informed, so certainly you've got the attending unit, a sergeant would be aware of the incident and that will also determine how many units may go given the history, because on route to a particular incident police do information gathering and determine what would be the best response. Thanks Gerard.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks very much for that Alasdair. Over to you Jenni in terms of the type of response that better place might have in this sort of a case.

**Jenni Dickson:** Thanks Gerard. Better place Australia provides an elder abuse prevention service through the integrated models of care. We've got three integrated models of care, and we also support five Orange Doors. Our model of care is based on the principles of empowering the older person with a risk overlay. Most of our services are done inreach to peoples homes, community locations, hospitals, wherever we can access the older person safely. We provide counselling, financial counselling, case coordination, family meetings and mediation, but only where appropriate and when it's risk assessed to occur. Prior to developing any care plan a risk assessment and a psychosocial assessment is undertaken, and relevant safety planning is put in place. This case study is really common for us and we would potentially receive two referrals. Because we support Orange Doors we would receive the L17 referral through the Orange Door and we probably could also receive a referral through the liaison officer.

Firstly we would undertake the assessment and if possible we would like to do that in hospital before they're discharged. We'd liaise with the liaison officer regarding discharge planning. We would probably also liaise at that point with Vic police to see where they're at with their proceedings. We would really try and ascertain what the older person wants and what their wishes are, because we do know that even in events like this older people can change their mind. So we would need to ascertain what it is they want to do and then respond with counselling and psychosocial education. In terms of safety planning, we would do safety planning with the older person. That may include going back to the Orange Door for a home assessment such as locks, cameras, all of those sorts of things to make sure that the home is actually safe. We would develop a care plan with the older person and that would, as I said before, include counselling, some psycho education. It may include interim residential respite care if there's injuries that they need to recover from. It may include additional support services to return home. It may include support through the intervention order process because that's quite stressful and quite difficult for the older person. Reconnecting with their daughter and families that they've potentially been socially isolated from. Because a big part of elder abuse as we know is socially isolating them from other loved ones.

Geographically, I think we are in regional locations so we are in Geelong and we're also in Traralgon. At times there might be less accessibility of services, but there's also geographical locations in Victoria that doesn't actually have dedicated elder abuse service responses at the moment. So that does make it difficult depending on which region they're in. Certainly there are areas with very little response.

In terms of key collaborations one of our key collaborations here to begin with would be the liaison officer because they've ‑ if the person has gone into primary care they're our first response. It would also be with Vic Pol. We've undertaken joint visits with Vic Pol in the past where we've explained the intervention order process to the older person to ease their anxiety. Senior Rights Victoria we may liaise with them re: advocacy or any other legal matters that are occurring. We would certainly be liaising with the magistrate’s court in terms of the liaison officer and that whole process of supporting the older person through the court hearings. And then there would be a range of other liaisons such as new services coming in, potentially home care packages and potentially ongoing case management. And then also liaising back with Orange Door about any further additional supports that the Orange Door could supply through their packages.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks very much Jenni. I've got pleasure to move on to some audience questions. The first one is about how your organisations work with older people who seek advice but don't act on it. So that's the first question. I'm reminded, Marnie, from SRV's point of view you mentioned the national elder abuse prevalence study and one of the bits of data that stood out to me is something like two‑thirds of older people who are currently experiencing elder abuse haven't yet connected with the service system in any way. Part of that could be that they don't know how to access the services, but part of it could well be this sort of reluctance where they've sought advice and haven't acted on it. From SRV's point of view how would you respond to that?

**Marnie Coghlan:** We're always happy to provide that free advice to the victim survivor, but understanding that they may not be ready to act, and I think it's always really important to remember that. We know that people experiencing family violence at all ages may take a number of attempts to extricate themselves from that relationship and these are very complicated, familial bonds that are present in this state. Most people tell us they don't want the relationship to end, they just want the behaviours to change, and so we need to ‑ and I think this is why this is lovely with the collaborative approach, is that the services that one approach may have may be right for someone at a particular point in time and another service might be more appropriate as they start to feel more empowered or the situation changes or sadly if the violence escalates. It's important to actually have that range of services, but it's also important to allow people to make their own choices. These are people, as I say all the time, these are people who have been making choices longer than I have. They know their own minds and if it is something where they have that information and they feel that that is a choice then it's about safety planning, it's about making sure that they know what is around them but respecting their decisions.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thank you very much for that Marnie. Very quickly it's amazing how time flies ‑ we've got to the final stage where I'm going to, as with the last panel, give you each a minute to make a concluding comment. Given the focus of our panel today could I ask you to reflect on what you would like to leave with our audience today on how a collaborative lens can strengthen their interaction with older people to address or prevent elder abuse and so if I could start with Carla and then Marnie, Alasdair and Jenni. Over to you Carla.

**Carla Wilkie:** From our perspective, we know that best practice family violence response is more broadly is to engage with secondary consultation and elder abuse cases can involve, I guess, relatively more complex and nuanced considerations which other areas as people move through life may not necessarily flow through. So there's a lot more variability with personal factors of victim survivors of elder abuse and the people who use violence toward older people as well. So I guess given that we each bring our own life experiences and personal biases it can be quite helpful to hear the viewpoint of an elder abuse expert to assist with supporting services to meet their duty of care and to assist their clients, but also I think the other panelists would agree that there is no wrong door when you're seeking secondary consultation for elder abuse. So whether you're accessing that secondary consultation with your liaison officers through the elder abuse project, Seniors Rights Victoria through Marnie and the other support helpline workers, Better Place Australia or your local family violence service will all try to connect you with the right services to support your client.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks very much Carla. Less than two minutes left so quickly Marnie then

**Marnie Coghlan:** I covered a lot of mine in my last answer but I just want to add to what Carla said about the no wrong door.

As I said different people will come into touch with services at different points and they may ‑ we co‑refer across our services at different points and in different orders. There's no set order, so I think it's important to remember that, and that the broader team is supporting someone experiencing violence the better outcomes they often have.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks Marnie. Alasdair.

**Alasdair Gall:** Looking at the time constraints, I guess by collaborating together the client is the primary focus, ensures to a large degree that their needs and preferences are implemented where there is no immediate safety issues.

There have been obviously many occasions where police have conducted safety risk welfare checks and from time-to-time joint visits.

What we have found is that early intervention leads to longer‑term safety and making it known to potential abusers or an abuser that not only an agency has concern for that mother or father or grandparent etc, but the police are also aware of the situation.

We certainly have ‑ where possible we take into account the victims wishes, but we do have a mandate to be proactive and an investigative role and where possible we do take the clients need.

There'll be a link I think sent to all participants of agencies require a safety or a welfare check. Different criteria ‑ I won't explain that given the time constraints. It will be self‑explanatory on the link.

If you require general advice in a non-urgent setting, contact the local Police Station...if there's an immediate attendance required ring triple zero. Your call is recorded and we can act immediately.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks Alasdair. Final comment to Jenni.

**Jenni Dickson:** I'll be very quick because we're over time.

Collaboration in elder abuse is vital. Not one service can do this on their own. It does need the collaboration of all the services.

Collaboration is more than just referring to a service. It's information sharing, it can be undertaking joint visits, so it's more than just me referring to seniors or Vic Pol. It involves more than. That it's broader than that and more comprehensive and that's really what we need to be able to be effective in preventing elder abuse.

**Gerard Mansour:** Thanks very much Jenni. Thank you very much to Carly, Marnie, Alasdair and Jenni. I would like to hand back to Parliamentary Secretary Josh to close the webinar today

**Josh Bull:** Thanks very much Gerard.

We should get you to run the parliament because you've again finished right on time. I'm not sure Parliament would be used to that but thank you and well done to everyone for that really important discussion.

Thank you to all of our speakers. We started with the opening address from the Minister, we then heard from Gerard about the campaign, a terrific keynote from Mark and then two really great panel discussions.

Can I take the opportunity to thank Michelle, Kate, Cathy, Dilnaz, Carla, Alasdair, Marnie and Jenni and everybody for the contributions that have been made today. Of course, everyone that has put this morning's event on.

I think it's been an opportunity to encourage us to think about attitudes, interactions, practices within this really important area of our community and our society, an opportunity to come together and collaborate and continue to share ideas, I think, is incredibly important.

Thank you again for joining us today for the contribution that have been made. We hope that everybody has found today beneficial. There is a survey which is intended to capture feedback for any ideas for future events, future opportunities, the recording will be circulated when it's ‑ after today's event, so once again to everyone that's been involved, a really important discussion.

Gerard thank you for all of your work and I should also take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank our Auslan interpreters, all of the work of the department for putting today together to bring today together.

I hope everyone has a fabulous day and I look forward to seeing you all very soon. Thanks so much

\*\* end of session