What happens when relationships with friends and family go wrong?

A community education resource kit for elder abuse prevention

The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) acknowledges the assistance of the Victorian Government in the development of this resource kit

An activity of the ECCV project in collaboration with Senior Rights Victoria to raise awareness in ethnic communities about elder abuse

The ECCV acknowledges the six community advisory groups whose expertise and valuable input form the basis of this resource kit

Some of the resources were adapted from the St Ives Uniting Church and UnitingCare Ageing *Respect for Seniors* Campaign in New South Wales, Australia. In particular, the 'As Life Goes On' DVD and resource kit.
www.respectforseniors.org

Disclaimer: all stories included in this kit are fictional and all photographs are stock images.
Any similarities to real life situations are coincidental.

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1. BACKGROUND

Elder abuse is any act which causes harm to an older person and is carried out be someone they know and trust such as family or friends.

1.1 Elder abuse in the migrant communities

There is a lack of research on elder abuse in the context of cultural diversity or migrant communities in Australia. There is no evidence to suggest that there is a higher prevalence of elder abuse in any cultural community[1]. However, it may be **more hidden** in migrant communities than in general population and evidence suggests that cases of suspected elder abuse for seniors from migrant backgrounds is **increasing.**

It is more hidden due to a range of factors, including:

- Lack of awareness and understanding of elder abuse, neglect and personal rights
- Significant stigma around problematic family relationships
- Limited access to supports and services due to cultural and linguistic barriers

Cases of suspected elder abuse for seniors from migrant backgrounds are increasing because:

- Many communities ageing en masse
- There are increasing risk factors for ageing migrant communities
- First generation migrants are facing these issues for first time

Culture is no hiding place for abuse, but that does not mean that a one-size-fits-all approach is appropriate.

Elder abuse is a complex and sensitive issue, making it difficult to identify all factors associated with an increased risk of abuse. The Victorian Government outlines a number of possible risk factors, all of which are cross-cultural.[2] However, some factors including isolation, dependency, lack of information and stress in the care relationship are of particular concern for older people from non-English speaking backgrounds. Lack of English language skills and reverting to first languages in ageing, a reluctance to seek help outside the family and smaller support networks following migration can mean that an older person is more vulnerable to abuse where it occurs, and that they are less likely to identify abuse or seek support.

1.2 Intergenerational conflict and migration

Intergenerational misunderstandings and conflicting expectations are common to all families; however, ECCV consultation indicates the process of migration can exacerbate this issue. Typically the older generation are less likely to adapt to the newer Australian culture due to language and cultural barriers and may fear losing their identity, so can idealise traditional values and practices. The younger

[1] Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria. (2009). *Reclaiming respect and dignity: Elder abuse prevention in ethnic communities.* Melbourne.

[2] Victorian Government. (2009). *With Respect to Age: Practice guidelines for health services and community agencies for the prevention of elder abuse.* Department of Health, Melbourne.

generation in contrast, tend to be future-orientated and more adaptive to the dominant cultural values of contemporary Australia.[3]

1.3 Project background

This resource kit was developed as part of the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) project that aims to empower, inform and resource culturally diverse seniors, and ethnic community support services, by raising awareness about seniors' rights and elder abuse prevention, including the role of Seniors Rights Victoria and how to access this and other supports.

This project is delivered in partnership with Seniors Rights Victoria and works with ethno-spexifix associations and CALD communities. For more information visit www.eccv.org.au

2. RESOURCE KIT: AN OVERVIEW

This *community resource kit on elder abuse prevention* provides the information to deliver talks and facilitate discussions to groups of older seniors from migrant backgrounds in the community. It includes notes for talks delivered without technology and notes on facilitating open discussion with groups based on **three narratives**.

The resource kit has been designed to support bilingual, bicultural professionals to deliver community education in the first language of the participants. It is important that the educators have an understanding of abuse of older persons and are connected with an agency that has expertise in elder abuse, such as Senior Rights Victoria and/or relevant ethnic welfare organisations.

The kit includes some basic information on facilitation. It doesn't provide notes or resources on peer education, public speaking or adult learning principles. It is assumed that the speakers have completed the bilingual education professional development, delivered by Seniors Rights Victoria and the ECCV, which covers these topics and additional information on elder abuse and services available.

Community education aims

1. To increase understanding amongst people from migrant backgrounds about how the rights and dignity of older people can be abused.
2. To encourage community members to explore how they can help prevent abuse.
3. To provide people with information about relevant services and supports if they are experiencing abuse or have concerns about making major life decisions.

Key message

We all have a right to be respected as we get older. Bad behaviour does not need to be tolerated, and there is help outside the family to support anyone who experiences mistreatment.

The community education is based on a presentation and open discussion format that uses scenarios or stories to stimulate discussion around the issues. While it is important to try and cover all of the information, you should develop your own style in delivering the education and feel comfortable about altering the structure or format accordingly. The format should also respond to the size of the group and their familiarity with the subject.

Each session should include the following fundamentals:

- ☑ The session is delivered in the first language.
- ☑ The key message is delivered.
- ☑ The session is interactive and empowering.
- ☑ There is an opportunity to speak one-on-one with the facilitator after the session.
- ☑ Groups are offered a follow up session to discuss the issue further.
- ☑ Participants each receive a leaflet of relevant services for further information or support.
- ☑ The session is designed to be one hour in duration or less.
- ☑ The facilitator is experienced in public speaking, working with groups and facilitation.
- ☑ While there is an expectation that the facilitator is well informed, there isn't an expectation that he/she is an expert on elder abuse. It is essential they have sound knowledge of where to refer people.
- ☑ Interactions within the session are directed by the older adult. The rights of older adults and their right to self-determination are acknowledged and respected.

2.1 Using the kit in English with an interpreter

This kit has been designed to be delivered in the first language. If you intend to use the kit to run education sessions through an interpreter, it is important to consider the following questions:

- Is the facilitator trained in working with an interpreter?
- Does the interpreter have an understanding of elder abuse prevention and appropriate translations of stigmatised or bureaucratic terminology?
- Has adequate time been allocated for briefing the interpreter prior to the session start (this should include clarification of their willingness to discuss sensitive issues)?
- Has the talk and discussion been shortened to take into account the additional time needed for interpreting?

2.2 Handling disclosures of elder abuse

Presentations should begin with a reminder that, due to the need to respect confidentiality, specific details regarding incidents of abuse of an older adult cannot be discussed. Despite this caution, the sensitive nature of the subject matter being presented is sometimes viewed by participants as an opportunity to either:

a) Ask general questions during the presentation about an incident of abuse about which they are concerned or
b) To speak individually to the presenter after the presentation about a specific incident

It is therefore suggested that the speaker be prepared to address such disclosures and keep referring the audience members to the relevant worker within an ethnic welfare organisation or the telephone help line of Senior Rights Victoria. The facilitator should have elder abuse print materials to distribute at the talk.

2.3 Philosophy and guiding principles

Abuse of older adults is hard to talk about and evokes strong emotions. Sometimes well-meaning people who are attempting to assist an abused older adult tell them what they 'should' do or act on their behalf in a manner that is against the person's wishes.

It is essential to acknowledge the rights of older adults and their right to self-determination when discussing this issue. It is the older adult who must direct the nature of any interaction.

2.4 Self-care

Those presenting talks on elder abuse should be aware that they may, at times, experience strong emotional feelings as a result of disclosures of abuse. It is important to consider different coping mechanisms should this occur. Professional debriefing is available via 1800 RESPECT.

2.5 Use of narratives

The use of narrative is a powerful way to ensure community education is relevant to the target audience. Three narratives have been developed to facilitate a practical understanding of the attitudes, values, beliefs and circumstances that can underpin situations of elder abuse or prevent a person from seeking help. They are designed to have a broad relevance to the community, in addition to any individuals who may be experiencing abuse.

The narratives are not case stories in that they are fictional and do not describe real people. They are based on input from community advisory groups around more commonly seen situations of elder abuse. Creative license has been used to generate three stories that encompass most of the key issues.

It is recommended that the narratives are used in a discussion-based format to actively engage the participants in the subject matter and encourage them to explore the attitudes and values that underpin situations of abuse and share their strategies for addressing abusive or disrespectful situations. This format also allows the facilitator to work with where at an appropriate level for the group, whilst delivering the key messages.

2.6 Disclaimer

We recognise there is diversity within any cultural group and the values and attitudes explored within this kit are by no means applicable to all older members of the migrant communities. Within any cultural group or community, individual views are shaped by many factors and people from the same culture do not think alike, share the same values or opinions. Likewise, cultural values and attitudes change over time and are never the same thing to everyone. It is important not to make assumptions or stereotype.

2.7 Overview of the scenarios

Familiarise yourself with the stories. Try not to read the narrative directly from the file. Imagine that you are telling a story to the audience. This will make it more engaging.

Be clear about where behaviour or conflict becomes abusive and therefore unacceptable.

Each scenario contains the following information

- ☑ A short narrative
- ☑ The key message of the story
- ☑ The aim of telling the story
- ☑ Suggested questions to open up discussion
- ☑ Background information about the types of elder abuse indicated in the story
- ☑ Background information about issues, attitudes and values that can underlie situations of abuse. Please note that these may not be in themselves abusive.

The questions

Question 1: What are the issues that could be of concern in this story? Do you think it ever happens?
Explores the ability of participants to identify issues in the story. Explores attitudes towards and awareness of those issues that potentially lead to elder abuse.

Question 2: How might the older person feel about this situation?
Stimulates thought about how the older person feels and how the situation may be abusive. The question opens up discussion on the values, attitudes, hopes and fears of the older person as well as motivations of other characters as they relate to abuse or compromised dignity.

Question 3: What are the rights that the older person might (respectfully) expect? What would be acceptable or unacceptable in the family conversation and decisions about their situation?
Draws out the potential risks or various types and degrees of abuse (subtle to overt) within each scenario. Asks participants to identify what is respectful behaviour, particularly towards older people, and the basic rights an older person should expect.

Question 4: What are traditional ways this family would have managed this situation in their country of origin? How have things changed in Australia?
Stimulates thought on traditional strategies or attitudes that may no longer work or may even be counterproductive in a modern Australian context. Important issues are increased dependence and the reluctance to seek help outside of the family.

Question 5: What would you advise the older person and their family to do? What else do they need to think about in this situation?
This question allows the participants to share and explore strategies to alleviate or prevent abusive or disrespectful situations.

Question 6: Where could the older person and his/her family get support in finding more information and making these decisions?
This question encourages participants to share information about services and supports.

2.8 Session format and structure

Small groups (12 people or less)
The recommended format is a short presentation followed by group discussion based on the narratives. The session ends with a summary, group feedback and a short time for individual consultation with the facilitator. Participants receive a pamphlet on elder abuse prevention and the facilitator completes a short tick-box evaluation form, asking participants the questions.

Presentation 10 mins	Introduces session and topic in presentation format. *See Appendix One* • To introduce facilitator and theme of session • To give basic information about elder abuse, its prevalence and different types • To introduce discussion
Discussion 20—30 mins	Use scenarios and questions to facilitate discussion around different situations of elder abuse. This is an open discussion format. *See section three*. • Empowerment approach helps group discover risks/triggers/prevention strategies to elder abuse • Encourages participants to discuss, understand and challenge relevant attitudes and values. • To deliver subsidiary key messages
Summary 5 mins	*See Appendix One* • To reinforce key messages, allow for final questions and end session • To offer a follow up session and one-one confidential time with facilitator in a safe place.
Evaluation 5 mins	*See Appendix Four.* • To inform the development of community education • To give participants the opportunity to raise any concern
1-1 time 10 mins	• To provide basic information and referral to anyone who maybe experiencing abuse or is concerned about anyone who may be experiencing abuse • To allow for any questions that a person doesn't want to raise in front of others.
Brochure	• Basic information about elder abuse and key services: Senior Rights Victoria plus a bilingual agency

Large groups There are a number of options for groups that are larger (13 people or more).

1. **Give an interactive presentation**
   Adapt the material into a 40 minute presentation. Use the scenarios and questions to get people to think. Drawbacks: participants' role is more passive, maybe difficult to keep them engaged and interested.
2. **Create a small group of 'interested' people**
   Deliver the introduction and then ask if interested people would like to join a breakaway group to discuss the topic further. Drawbacks: people may not want to publically acknowledge interest due to stigma or privacy issues.

3. **Conduct multiple visits to each group**
   For example see the women from the group one week and the men from the group the following week. This may enable the group to explore issues more relevant to them. Drawbacks: high demand on staff resources.
4. **Break into small groups for self-directed discussion**
   The facilitator still leads and feeds in questions for each group to discuss independently. The groups could then feedback at the end of each story. Drawbacks: time consuming, less able to guide discussion or feed in key messages.
5. **Increase number of facilitators**
   Give the introduction to the whole group and then break into smaller groups each with their own facilitator. Drawbacks: high demand on staff resources.

TIPS

Set up the space differently
People attend groups to socialise and it is natural for them to continue talking during the presentation. By moving the chairs you change the dynamic and engage the audience more fully.

Find a champion within the group.
The support of a respected person the group knows is invaluable. This could be a committee member, or coordinator such as a religious leader or welfare worker. Speak to them before the day of the session. Ask them to introduce the session and emphasise its importance.

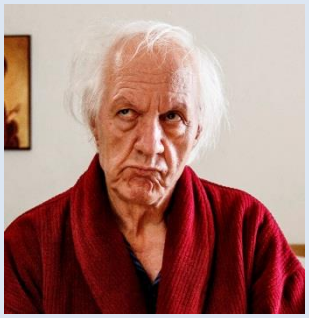
USING AUDIO VISUAL RESOURCES:

Within my walls is a film developed by Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria as part of the *Raising Awareness of elder abuse in ethnic communities project*, in close consultation with community advisors. It contains four stories that depict different types of elder abuse. Some of the stories are similar to those in this kit. The film is overdubbed into Cantonese, Mandarin, Greek, Macedonian, Serbian, Turkish and Tagalog. The whole film is approximately 17 minutes long, or each story of approximately 3-4 minutes can be viewed individually. There is also a 2 minute information clip containing key messages regarding elder abuse, developed by community advisory groups.

Film is a powerful medium for delivering community education. Community educators may choose to use this film instead of the written narratives. Copies are available from the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria. Equipment such as a DVD player or laptop, screen, projector and speakers or TV are needed to screen the film.

3. SCENARIOS

3.1 Story one: "When caring gets too much?"



Con's story

Katerina cares for her young daughter, as well as for her father Con, who has dementia. Con is becoming increasingly forgetful and confused. Sometimes he is agitated and frightens the child. Although Katerina has always been able to communicate with her father, lately he has been difficult to understand. Katerina doesn't get much rest, and she is afraid to leave Con alone. She sometimes locks him in his room to keep him safe when she is out. Katerina feels very tired and overwhelmed.

Key message

Abuse has many forms and can be unintentional. Sometimes we don't recognise where our behaviour compromises the dignity and respect for our loved ones. There are services and supports that can help us understand how to care better for our family and help relieve the pressure of caring.

AIM To increase understanding and recognition of elder abuse related to stress in the care relationship. To increase knowledge of culturally relevant services that can provide support and break down stigma that may prevent people seeking help.

Questions

1. What are the issues and concerns in this story? Do you think it ever happens?
2. How might Con feel about this situation? How might Katerina feel? Why might they see the situation differently?
3. What is the role of the wider community, Con and Katerina's friends and social networks in this situation? How can they influence the way they feel?
4. What would be respectful for Con and Katerina in this family's relationship and decisions about their future?
5. What would you advise Con and Katerina to do? What do they need to think about in this situation?
6. Where could Con, Katerina and their family get support to find out more information and improve their situation?

Background

In Australia approximately 1,000,000 carers' lives are affected by caring for someone with dementia. As members of migrant communities in Australia reach old age in large numbers, dementia and other age related illnesses that signify the loss of physical and emotional independence have increased. Stress in the care relationship is common as family members become emotionally and physically tired and relationships change. Abuse may occur or increase in this pressured environment potentially perpetrated by the carer, the person being cared for, or both. This may or may not be intentional abuse.

Some types of abuse that could be indicated in this story

Neglect Failing to provide adequate care for an older person with dementia/other illness (can include not keeping them clean, not giving enough food, locking someone in a room etc).

The failure of the family to support the carer can lead to neglect. Support could mean helping Katerina access services. Actively blocking services from outside the family or discouraging her to seek help and allocate the caring role solely to her may be neglect.

Physical abuse There is the potential where there is stress in the care relationship for both people to become frustrated, tired and overwhelmed which can lead to an escalation of abusive behaviour, such as aggressive language, shouting, pushing and slamming doors.

Emotional Where the carer makes threats to the person with dementia.

Underlying issues, attitudes or values that could influence the people in this story

Stigma around accepting help outside of the family – It is traditional for the family to care for their older or frail members. Accepting help from outside the family can be seen as shameful or a failure. This can be exacerbated by a lack of culturally relevant services, or previous negative experiences of seeking help outside the family. Such stigma could prevent a family discussing the situation openly and honestly. Even if they are made aware of services available, a family or carer may choose not to use them.

Stigma around disability or dementia – There can be a lack of understanding and stigma around some illnesses. Family members may find it difficult to discuss or see physical changes in an older person. This can result in avoiding the older person or neglecting their care.

Values around women's role as carer – In many traditionally patriarchal cultures, the role of caring is given to women and there can be strong expectations from the family and wider community that they will fulfil this role. Women may feel social pressure to continue or feel resigned to their situation.

Role of the extended family – The extended family and community may prefer and reinforce traditional expectations even when they clash with the needs of an individual.

Lack of awareness of options – A person may continue to struggle alone because they are not aware of other options or supports.

Lack of appropriate services – lack of culturally relevant services or lack of services in some areas

Coping with change – Loss and grief may go unrecognised due to feelings of duty to family members. If the emotions around a significant illness are unacknowledged, the emotional needs of the carer may not be met. This may impact on their capacity to provide adequate care.

Intergenerational conflict - Intergenerational differences around expectations of caring for the older person may exist.

Dementia and ageing – older migrants with dementia may revert to their original language or dialects. In addition, many older migrants may have experienced trauma as young people (war, poverty, natural disaster) which could "come back to haunt them" in later years.

Unresolved emotions related to care of own parents – Many older people left their parents behind when they migrated and were not able to return and care for them as they got older. This may result in unresolved feelings of guilt or grief. They may feel that any lack of care from their own children is a retribution for past actions.

3.2 Story 2: "Adult children and trust"

Mara and Nick's story

Mara and Nick's son Alex returned to live with them last year following his divorce. It has been difficult as he is often angry and depressed. However, Alex has been helping with the shopping and paying bills. Mara recently discovered that $5,000 has disappeared from her bank account. She thinks he may have taken the money to go to the casino. Mara has been having problems sleeping. She hasn't told Nick about her concerns. She isn't sure what to do.

Key message

When communities talk about these issues, it gives older people permission to speak up about their concerns. Elder abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of their background.

AIM To challenge stigma about asking for help. To encourage older people to protect themselves from financial abuse.

Questions

1. What are the issues and concerns in this story? Do you think it ever happens in the community?
2. How might Mara and Nick feel about this situation? How might Alex feel? Why might they see the situation differently?
3. What are traditional ways this family would have coped with a family member becoming different, losing physical and emotional independence? How have things changed in Australia?
4. What would be respectful for Mara, Nick and Alex in this family's relationship and decisions about the future?
5. What would you advise Mara and her family to do? What do they need to think about in this situation?
6. Where could Mara and her family get support in finding more information and making these decisions?

Background

Financial abuse can be the type of abuse that people feel most comfortable talking about in public. However, it often is connected to other types of abuse that are equally destructive. This story highlights the issues that can be involved with adult children returning to the parental home who have experienced issues with drug and alcohol addiction or problem gambling. This often occurs following divorce or relationship breakdown. Stigma around these issues and the elder abuse that can follow on from them is a key element to explore in this story.

Many older people from migrant backgrounds may have low levels of literacy in their own language as well as English. This leaves them dependent upon adult children. Encouraging people to seek advice from trusted people before signing documents or allowing access to bank accounts is one way to prevent abuse.

Types of abuse that could be indicated in this story

Financial	Taking money without permission Misuse of Financial Enduring Power of Attorney Not paying bills as agreed Selling possessions without permission Selling or taking control of assets without permission – often through asking an older person to sign a form they don't understand.
Emotional	Restricting access to grandchildren, for example, an adult child may threaten to withdraw access to grandchildren if their parents don't lend them money Telling an older person they are stupid or useless Making an older person feel uncomfortable or unhappy
Social	When an adult child moves in, they may begin to isolate their older parents or grandparents from their social networks through making it uncomfortable for friends to visit or not supporting them to see friends outside. Putting the older person down in social situations or encouraging laughter at their expense can undermine the older person's confidence and prevent them from seeking help.

Underlying attitudes or values that could influence the people in this story

Expectations around inheritance – Some adult children may have a sense of entitlement around their parents' assets, that money and possessions are somehow theirs already. This can be a complex relationship as the parents may recognise they have had to depend more on children following migration. Parents may have often encouraged a sense of entitlement to allow their children to enjoy what they couldn't in their own lives, and having worked hard all their lives to provide for them.

Adult children with issues – Following migration to Australia, families from many cultural backgrounds have faced the issue of children developing drug and alcohol issues or becoming problem gamblers. There can be high levels of stigma around talking about this issue which is a growing problem for the community.

Smaller family networks following migration– traditionally larger family networks may have provided more options for support for older people.

Role of the family and wider community – Stigma and unchallenged attitudes that exist at a family and community level can have a profound effect on whether or not a person seeks help. Keeping the family together can be viewed as preferable to protecting the rights of an older individual, particularly women. Conversely the family and community have the potential to support a person experiencing elder abuse to seek help through providing a social lifeline.

Traditional role of adult son in legal and financial affairs – Traditionally the adult son may be given the role of looking after the financial and legal affairs of the family once the father is no longer able to do so. The daughter may tend to be given the role of caring. This may lead to a situation where financial abuse can occur if the adult son doesn't act in the best interests of the older person.. Older women could be particularly vulnerable due to low levels of financial literacy.

Protecting the good name of the family – keeping up appearances can be very important in the community, and can prevent a person from seeking help or admitting to a problem.

Traditional trust of family – Whilst this is in many ways a positive cultural trait, it can lead to making long-term arrangements without discussing expectations or potential changes in circumstances. Independent legal or financial advice is often not sought. There is a lack of understanding of Enduring Power of Attorney, and options available to them. People may sign documents without understanding what they are.

3.3 Story three: Vesna's story

Vesna and Drago married young and have been together for fifty years. They have worked hard all their lives to keep the family together, but now Drago is no longer working and has nothing to do. Since their children moved out, Vesna and Drago have slept in separate bedrooms, and have been disagreeing more than ever. Drago stops Vesna from visiting her friends, and has doesn't allow her money to send overseas. Vesna believes she must endure his bad moods for the sake of the marriage.

Key message

Throughout our life we can be faced with difficult situations. It is important to remember there are choices and alternatives. Although these can be daunting, there is help available for you to understand your rights and make the best decision for you.

AIM There is help outside the family for older people to understand options and make informed decisions.

Questions

1. What are the issues and concerns in this story? Do you think it ever happens??
2. How might Vesna feel about this situation? How might Drago feel? Why might they see the situation differently?
3. What are traditional ways this family would have managed this situation? How have things changed in Australia?
4. What would be respectful for Vesna in this family's relationship and decisions about the future?
5. What would you advise Vesna and her family to do? What else do they need to think about in this situation?
6. Where could Vesna and her family get support in finding more information and making these decisions?

Background

Traditionally, people marry early, children are born quickly, and divorce is rare. There may be unresolved conflict, underlying anger and marriage disharmony. Despite this conflict, couples try very hard to stay together. Couples and family are unlikely to have developed effective means of communication and problem solving to discuss tensions or problems that may arise in a marriage. Relationship conflict can be deferred while a couple is busy raising children. Once the children have left the family home, problems in the relationship can surface. This can lead to physical and emotionally abusive behaviour.

Types of abuse that could be indicated in this story

Physical abuse	Hitting, pushing, yelling, shouting, threatening
Emotional abuse	Telling a person they are worthless Ignoring an older person
Social abuse	Not allowing a person to visit their friends or socialise
Financial abuse	Using money as a means of control, by restricting access to bank accounts or cash

Underlying issues, attitudes or values that could influence the people in this story

Duty of women in marriage - Women may stay in unhappy situations out of a sense of duty to their families and will stay in a marriage "until death".

Gender roles: As in many patriarchal cultures, women may not have much control in a family. Traditionally, men may control their finances and who they socialise with in the fear that they will learn about "rights for women" that are available in Australia. Women may be dependent upon their husbands (and adult sons) to access money.

Traumatic migration experience: For those who migrated as refugees, there may be feelings of grief, loss of identity, and loss of family and friends. Older people may not how to recognise problems or voice their needs. Looking back at their previous life, they may feel that no one understands them or that people are against them. This trauma means they may be "old before their time" and have illness or disabilities.

Lack of awareness of options: Many migrant seniors have a lack of awareness of the options that are available to them and may be dependent on information and advice provided by family members.

Lack of services: There is a lack of culturally appropriate services, and a mistrust of services

First time experience of ageing – older migrants may not have seen their parents age and may have limited experience of ageing.

Lack of understanding of mental illness – anxiety and depression are not well understood. Older people may self-medicate or misuse medication. There may be high levels of stress resulting from traumatic experiences pre-migration (war, poverty) and migration shock.

Protecting the good name of the family – keeping up appearances can be very important, and can prevent a person from seeking help or admitting to a problem, for fear that they will be ostracised.

Social isolation – smaller networks of family and friends in a new country may lead to social isolation. This may be exacerbated by housing in suburbs which lack transport and community spaces.

4. MESSAGES and MEDIA

4.1 English version

- We all have a right to respect and dignity as we get older. However, relationships with family and friends can go wrong.
- Up to five per cent of older people may experience some form of elder abuse.
- Elder abuse is no more common in migrant communities than the general population, but it is more hidden, due to shame, stigma or not knowing where to turn for help.
- Elder abuse is any act which causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust.
- The mistreatment of older people has many forms.
- Sometimes people don't think about the consequences of their actions. And that the older person is experiencing their behaviour as abusive.
- Your adult children may not always tell you the truth, especially if they have problems like gambling, drinking or taking drugs
- You may not be signing what you think you are. Getting independent advice or talking to someone outside the family is a good idea.
- Sometimes our children have unrealistic expectations of us. Family does not always understand how we are feeling and what we are able to do as we age. It's important to help our families, but it is also important to talk about limitations.
- Staying connected to social networks is an important part of having some independence, and your needs are just as important as those of other family members.
- Throughout our life we can be faced with difficult situations. Although these can be daunting, there are choices. Don't suffer in silence – help is around the corner, even when it feels like it isn't.
- We all have a right to respect and dignity as we get older. No-one needs to accept a disrespectful and unhappy situation. If you need help you should speak to someone you trust.

5. APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix one: Presentation English Version

Introduction

Introduce yourself and thank the group for inviting you to deliver the talk. Say a little about your involvement (history) with your organisation or with Senior Rights Victoria.

If the group is less than 12 ask them to introduce themselves and say how long they have been a member of the group. Ask them to say a short sentence about what respect/dignity means to them.

If the group is larger, ask the group to think about what respect/dignity means to them and then elicit a few example answers from the group.

Today's session

It is important to be clear about what the presentation or discussion is about. Outline what the topic is and what will NOT be covered. These are the questions the session will answer:

- What is respectful or disrespectful behaviour towards older people in relationships with family and friends? What does it mean to us as individuals, families and communities when an older person's dignity is compromised by someone they trust?
- What are some ways that older people experience disrespect and mistreatment?
- How have traditional ways of maintaining dignity as we age been affected by migration to Australia?
- How can we prevent the mistreatment of older people in our families and communities?
- What kind of help is there for older people that are experiencing this problem and what help is there to support the family to build healthier relationships?

Key message

We all have a right to be respected and live life well as we get older. We don't need to tolerate bad behaviour as individuals or as a community, and there is help outside the family to support anyone who experiences abuse.

Definition of elder abuse

Spend some time explaining the kind of elder abuse that will be covered in today's session. The extent of elder abuse and that it is difficult to estimate as a significant proportion goes underreported.

- The Victorian Government defines elder abuse as 'any act occurring within a relationship of trust which results in harm to the older person'.
- The relationship of trust can be with a partner, family member, friend or carer
- Usually the 'relationship of trust' is with another family member and in most incidences the family member is the son or daughter.

Make sure people understand what is meant by the 'relationship of trust'. Maybe ask them to name one person with whom they have a similar 'relationship of trust' or identify someone e.g. partner, husband, wife, sister, sons, daughters, cousins etc.

- This kind of mistreatment of older people is more common than we realise.
- Australian researchers estimate that 2 to 7% of older persons (over 65 years old) in the community experience mistreatment.
- Any older person may experience mistreatment. Men and women of any income level, any cultural group, people in good health or people with physical or mental disabilities may all be mistreated by someone close to them.
- There is a lack of research on this issue in culturally diverse communities. There is no research or evidence to show that it occurs more in any one cultural community than any other. However, when an older person has a migrant background, they may be less likely to seek help or know about what help is available for them and their family.

Forms of mistreatment and neglect

The mistreatment of older people by people they trust can take many forms. It can be about their financial, emotional, social, physical, or sexual wellbeing. Mistreatment can also mean the absence of care, this is called neglect.

Give one short example for each type of abuse. Some ideas are below

Financial	Using an older person's bank card without permission
Physical	Shouting, pushing, hitting, locking a person in a room
Emotional	Threats to send an older person away
Social	Not allowing an older person to visit their friends or use the phone
Sexual	Non-consensual sexual contact or language
Neglect	Failure to provide the basic necessities of life, such as food, warmth and shelter

Frame the discussion

We have some stories that show how disrespect and mistreatment can occur.

These stories do not describe real life people but they do reflect commonly seen situations.

I will ask some questions so that we can discuss the story and what is happening for that person, for that family.

Please respect other people's time to speak in the discussion.

At the end of the session there will be some time to talk to me individually if you are concerned about someone you know.

We don't have to cover everything today. I can come back another time to talk about this some more.

Narratives and discussion

Tell the story and ask the question. Be clear what the key message is of the story and that this comes through the discussion. Conclude each story with the question what could this person do? List the possible options and supports (emphasise the role of SRV and ethnic agencies as well as sharing useful participant strategies). Repeat the above for stories two and three if time permitting.

Conclusion

Ask participants what is the main message that they have come away with from the discussion.

- Recap the key messages of each story or any strong themes that have emerged.

The mistreatment of older adults has many forms. It can be intentional or unintentional.

The needs and wellbeing of older people are as important as other members of the family.

No-one needs to accept a disrespectful and unhappy situation. If people need help they should speak to someone they trust.

Staying connected to social networks is an important part of having some independence.

- Bilingual workers in community organisations can often help explain options or connect people to other services. Senior Rights Victoria specialises in helping older people who are being mistreated.
- Senior Rights Victoria can offer a range of services through a (free) interpreter.
    - Free and confidential advice for people over 60 years old
    - Telephone service or home visits
    - Short term advocacy and support
    - Specialist free legal advice

Give the pamphlet at this point and complete the evaluation forms. Ask the group evaluation questions.

Always leave sufficient time for any questions and one on one consultation at the end of the session.

5.2 Appendix 2: Support Services

Elder abuse	**Seniors Rights Victoria** Helpline 1300 368 821 info@seniorsrights.org.au		Information, support, advice and education to help prevent elder abuse and safeguard the rights, dignity and independence of older people. Services include a Helpline, specialist legal services, short-term support and advocacy for individuals and community education.
Ethno-specific support and aged care			Range of bicultural services including referral support, social support, community education.
Interpreter services	**Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS) National** 131 450		Call TIS for a telephone interpreter. Available wherever you see the interpreter sign and can be available for other organisations also.
Family violence	**In Touch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence** 1800 755 988 freecall 03 9413 6500		A statewide family violence service provider with bicultural, bilingual services and programs. Services include crisis intervention and recovery, prevention and awareness raising, education and research and advocacy.
	Victoria Police 000 and ask for the police or call your local police station and make an appointment		Victoria Police is governed by the Code of Practice for the investigation of family violence. This outlines how Victoria Police will respond effectively to, and ensure the safety and wellbeing of victims, and to make appropriate referrals to other agencies. Police will provide interpreters at all stages of the investigation.
Debriefing and professional support	**1800 RESPECT** 1800 737732		A free, confidential national helpline counselling service that offers professional debriefing to practitioners, friends and family who are dealing with sexual, domestic or family violence or are upset by disclosures of abuse. Counsellors are qualified practitioners and are trained in cultural competency and have at least three years' counselling experience. Callers can remain anonymous
Housing	**Home at Last** 1300 765 178 freecall		Free and confidential advice, support and advocacy to older people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or want to plan their housing future. Available to older Victorians on a low income with lower assets.
Legal support	**The Law Institute of Victoria** 03 9607 9550 www.liv.asn.au/Referral referrals@liv.asn.au		Can make a referral to a lawyer or solicitor who can give 30mins of free legal advice. The telephone (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) and online referral service can help find the right area of law.
	Victorian Legal Aid 03 9269 0120 English 1800 677 402 (country callers)		Free legal helpline for general information over the phone about the law. Open Monday to Friday, 8.45 am to 5.15 pm.

	Community legal centres www.communitylaw.org.au		Independent community organisations that provide free legal services to the public. They help clients who face economic and social disadvantage, are ineligible for legal aid and cannot afford a private lawyer. CLCs can provide legal information, initial advice and in some cases ongoing assistance.
	Seniors Rights Victoria Helpline 1300 368 821		Free legal advice from specialist solicitors that is not means tested.
General services	**General Practitioners**		Can be the first to recognise or respond to elder abuse. Their principal action is referral. Issues can arise where both the perpetrator and victim of abuse share the same GP.
	Centrelink social workers 131 202 multilingual phone service Mon-Fri, 8am– 5pm		Social workers can provide brochures and information about elder abuse and financial abuse. However, this service is not geared to elder abuse prevention.
	Community Health centres		Community health centres operate from a social model of health and acknowledge the social, environmental and economic factors that affect health, as well as the biological and medical factors.
	Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS) www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/services/assess		ACAS are independent teams who assist frail older people and their carers identify what kind of care will best meet their needs. Assessment teams are multi-disciplinary and can include health professionals such as medical officers, social workers, nurses, occupational therapists and physiotherapists. ACAS Assessment Officers have received training in elder abuse awareness and prevention.
	Home and Community Care (HACC) Assessment Service Contact the relevant local government to request a HACC Assessment		HACC Assessment officers can provide a Living at Home Assessment. This takes place, wherever possible in the client's home and assists people to explore a range of ways to live independently and remain active members of their community. Clients can refer themselves to a HACC Assessment Service or be referred by a GP, health service or community organisation. HACC Assessment officers may have received training in elder abuse awareness and prevention.
	Royal District Nursing Service 1300 33 44 55		HACC assessment and home nursing service
	Gambler's Help **Northern:** 1300 133 445 **Eastern:** 1300 131 973 **Western**: (03) 9296 1234 **Inner metro:** (03) 9653 3250 **Southern**: (03) 9575 5353		Free and confidential service to reduce gambling related harm. Counselling, financial counselling, peer support, community education. Online counselling available here: http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/ and immediate phone support here: 1800 858 858
	MIND 1300 286 463 info@mindaustralia.org.au		Information, advice and support for people with mental illness and their families.

Carer's Victoria
http://www.carersvictoria.org.au/
1800 242 636

Support for carers, including counselling, respite services, telephone advisory service

Alzheimer's Australia
1800 100 500
https://vic.fightdementia.org.au/

Support groups, helpline, telephone outreach, counselling. A range of tip sheets and information in other languages and cultural resources available on website.

Lifeline
13 11 14

Lifeline is a 24-hour telephone counselling service that is available every day of the year to anyone and everyone. The service is only available in English.

Appendix 3 : Evaluation form

Questions *to be completed by the community education facilitator*

Facilitator details:

Name_____ **Organisation** _____

Seniors group details:

Name_____

Location (LGA _____

Cultural background _____

Contact _____ **Email**_____

Phone _____

Community education session details:

Date _____**Number of attendees** Male ☐

Female ☐

Style of community education

☐ Presentation only

☐ Joint presentation & open discussion

☐ Film screened

Details: (entire film/single story/info clip)

_____

Results questions (overpage)

Facilitator to complete form in spaces available on the basis of group feedback immediately at the end of the session.

Options for coordinating feedback:

1. For large groups (over 12 people)
   a) Ask for two or three volunteers to give you feedback about the session immediately afterwards.
   b) Ask the group leader to give feedback on behalf of the group.
   c) When there are multiple bilingual workers, coordinate small groups for feedback, each coordinated by a bilingual worker who completes the form.
2. For small groups (less than 12 people) it is possible to ask the questions to the group as a whole.

In this session we have talked about respect and dignity for older people in family relationships.

Has anything changed about your understanding of this issue as a result of today's session?

What did you find most interesting about today's session?

What would you like to find out more information about?

In what ways could we improve these sessions?

Would you share the information you have received today with other members of your community?

Appendix4 : Legal terminology explained

What is an enduring power of attorney (medical treatment)?

An enduring power of attorney (medical treatment) is a legal document where you (the donor) appoint someone (the agent) to make medical decisions for you. These may include agreeing to medication, surgery, and other medical procedures. Enduring means it continues (endures) when you are unable to make these types of decisions for yourself.

You complete, sign, and have witnessed an enduring power of attorney (medical treatment) form – giving power of attorney to someone you choose. Their power begins when you are unable to make decisions.
Your agent's decisions have the same legal force as if you had made them yourself.

Download the factsheet: enduring power of attorney (medical treatment) from the Office of the Public Advocate

What is an enduring power of attorney (financial)?

An enduring power of attorney (financial) is a legal document where an individual (the 'donor') can give another person (the 'attorney') the legal right to make financial and legal decisions for them. This may include managing matters such as banking, property, and paying bills. 'Enduring' means the power continues (endures) even when an individual is unable to make these types of decisions for themselves due to accident or illness resulting in incapacity, either temporary or permanent.

The power can be executed by completing an Enduring Power of Attorney (Financial) form, giving power of attorney to a person chosen by the donor. The form must be signed and witnessed.

The time at which the powers take effect can be specified on the form as can conditions on the decisions an attorney can make. The attorney agrees by signing the acceptance section of the form. The attorney's decisions have the same legal force as if the donor had made them.

Download the factsheet: enduring power of attorney (financial) from the Office of the Public Advocate

What is an enduring power of guardianship?

An enduring power of guardianship is a legal document where you (the donor) appoint someone (the guardian) to make personal and lifestyle decisions for you – like where you live and the health care you receive. Enduring means it continues (endures) when you are unable to make these types of decisions for yourself.

Download the factsheet: guardianship from the Office of the Public Advocate

The above information has been taken from the Office of the Public Advocate Victoria. Further information can be found at www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au 8 January 2015

a. **Appendix seven:** Brochure