



Elder Abuse issues within diverse communities – what does that look like?

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Introduction

- ▶ Acknowledgement of Aboriginal Elders (Past & Present), Custodians of land & history



Multicultural Australia

- ▶ ABS Census 2011 data
- ▶ 1 in 4 Australians are born overseas (5.3 million people of 21.5 million resident population)
- ▶ Australia older population reflects significant cultural diversity (due to post war immigration) with 36% of 65 year old having been born overseas
- ▶ Older immigrants 25% (equates 600,000 older people) are from non-Anglo countries: after UK/Ireland, Italy, Greece, European heritage, 5% were from Asian countries (China & India)
- ▶ ABS 2016 census released July 2017



Brisbane Primary Health network

- ▶ Brisbane South Primary Health Network –Whole of Region Needs Assessment (2016)
- ▶ Estimated population in BSPHN region 1.1 million of which:
- ▶ People born in non-English speaking countries = 140,000
- ▶ People aged 65 years + =130,000
- ▶ Aged care is priority area: concerns around: Poor communication between hospitals and RACFs, Limited awareness of available services by patients, carers and health professionals. There is need to improve primary care services to older clients to reduce hospital admissions (p66)



National Aging & Aged Care Strategy for people from CALD backgrounds (2015)

- ▶ **Inclusion** – needs of older people from CALD backgrounds, their families are included in development of Australian government Aging and Aged care policies and programs on going basis
- ▶ **Empowerment** – Older people from CALD backgrounds, their families & carers are supported and have knowledge & confidence to maximise their use of aged care system

National Aging & Aged Care Strategy for people from CALD backgrounds (2015)

- ▶ **Access & Equity** – All areas of ageing and aged care understand the importance of and deliver culturally & linguistically responsive care
- ▶ **Quality** – Care & support services are appropriate to the needs of Older people from CALD backgrounds, their families and carers are assessed accordingly
- ▶ **Capacity Building** – Individuals from CALD backgrounds & CALD communities have capacity to both articulate their aging and aged care needs and be involved in the development of services and the workforce to meet these needs

Role of Social work in Aged Care

- ▶ Social workers are involved in supporting Older people in many areas of practice including: Aged care, carer support & assessment, health, housing, income support, legal, advocacy and disability (AASW Position paper on 'Aging in Australia', 2013).
- ▶ Social workers values: Respects for persons, Social Justice and Professional Integrity (AASW Code of Ethics 2010)
- ▶ Social workers will promote 'Self determination and autonomy of clients, actively seeking to enable them to make informed decisions on their own behalf' (AASW Code of Ethics 2010, 5.2.2)
- ▶ AASW Practice standard 3: 'Culturally responsive and inclusive practice' (AASW 2013)

Elder Abuse of Older people

- ▶ Elder Abuse can take various forms: Physical, Psychological, Sexual & Financial
- ▶ Elder Abuse is defined by World Health Organisation *“single or repeated act of lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person”*.
- ▶ Financial abuse is defined as “illegal or improper exploitation or use of funds or resources of the Older person”
- ▶ Psychological & Financial Abuse being most common type of abuse reported, one study suggest 20% for Older women

Risk Factors for Financial Abuse of Older people

- ▶ Bagshaw & colleagues (2013) examined risk factors for Elder financial abuse from views of 209 Service providers and concerns of 114 Older people and their family members about financial abuse, Identified 6 risk factors:
 1. Family member having strong sense of entitlement to an older person's property or possessions (85%)
 2. An older person having diminished capacity (82%)
 3. An older person being dependent on a family member for care (81%)
 4. A family member having a drug or alcohol problem (73%)
 5. An older person feeling frightened of a family member (73%)
 6. An older person lacking awareness of his or her rights and entitlements (72%)

Traditional collectivist culture

- ▶ Filial Piety – Confucian philosophy generally means ‘to be good to one’s parents, to take care of one’s parents, show respect to Elders’ It is key virtue of Chinese and Asian cultures.



Traditional collectivist culture

- ▶ Indian culture – joint family households, Older people are viewed as ‘head of households’
- ▶ For many Asian or Indian migrant families it will be seen ‘shameful’ to send their elderly parents to Aged care facility or retirement/nursing home.
- ▶ Majority of primary care giver are women who will care for elderly parents or In-Laws



Elder Abuse within CALD communities

- ▶ Blundell & Clare (2012) exploratory study undertaken in WA identified the following issues facing CALD groups and Elder Abuse:
- ▶ Cultural responses to Abuse
- ▶ Impact of Migration journey
- ▶ Translation and Interpreter issues
- ▶ Language barriers, increased vulnerability & decreased access to services
- ▶ Social isolation (unable to access transport)
- ▶ Professionals cultural understanding of working with CALD Older people and recognising Elder Abuse

Elder Abuse in CALD communities

- ▶ Zannettino, Bagshaw, Wendt & Adams, (2015) study found:
- ▶ Heightened vulnerability due to language difficulties (if they are from NESB backgrounds)
- ▶ Social dependency on family members for support (food/shelter/money)
- ▶ Potential conflict caused by inter-generational conflict and expectations in relation to care 'Filial piety responsibilities'
- ▶ Potential conflict over Asset management, use of Wills and Enduring Powers of Attorney

Financial Decision making

- ▶ Jill Wilson & Cheryl Tilse (2015) have undertaken extensive research on Older people and their financial assets.
- ▶ There are 3 broad overlapping approaches to decision making with decreasing levels of control by Older person : Self-determination, supported decision making and substitute decision making
- ▶ Cultural duties – there is conflict around asset management and how much is left for inheritance and assist young generation
- ▶ Social Worker may undertake an Assessment – would need to consider Older person views/wishes (decision making), Role of Carers (which can be counter to Older person wishes), Older person capacity to make decision and being advocate for Older person

Emerging Issues in Practice

- ▶ Influx of Indian Migrants – via Parent Visa [DIBP 2016 data shows 66,000 Indian parents]
- ▶ Young Indian migrants bring out their ‘Parents’ to assist with childcare responsibilities while they work full time.
- ▶ Financial abuse may occur when young Indian migrants have “forced/coerced” their Elderly parents to sell financial assets (eg India – land/property) so that they can purchase house in Australia
- ▶ These ‘Indian Parents’ are not aware of their rights, further exploited by their adult children (due to language barriers, no access to Australian welfare system due to temporary visa, social isolation and desire to keep family honour intact)

Emerging Issues in Practice

- ▶ Familism – emphasizes the needs of the family over the needs of individual, [conceal mistreatment and inhibit formal help-seeking], need to preserve family honor and status within community despite Elder Abuse
- ▶ CALD women – vulnerable after becoming widow ‘low social status’ and maybe forced to give up her financial assets to Adult sons (cultural expectation)
- ▶ Family violence may also occur in extreme cases and be under-reported due to shame, fear of Police, language barriers and social isolation



Since women are often more vulnerable to abuse, it is important to educate women who may become targets of elder abuse.



Community Education about Elder Abuse in CALD communities

Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV) have developed multi-lingual resources, video about Elder Abuse in the following languages /CALD communities:

- Tagalog (Filipino), Macedonian, Chinese (Mandarin & Cantonese), Greek, Serbian, Turkish, Polish, Croation, Indian languages, Russian, Vietnamese,

- ▶ <http://eccv.org.au/projects/elder-abuse-prevention-in-ethnic-communities/>

References & Resources

- ▶ Bagshaw, Wendt, Zannettino, Adams (2013) 'Financial abuse of Older people by family members: Views & Experiences of Older Australians & their family members, Australian Social Work Journal, v66:1, p86-104
- ▶ Wilson & Tilse (2015) 'Opening up options: Decision making around Older people's assets'. Australian Social work Journal, v68:2, 153-155
- ▶ Blundell & Clare (2012) Elder abuse in CALD communities: Developing best practice
- ▶ <http://www.ecald.com/Resources/Resources-Publications/ID/952/Elder-Abuse-in-Culturally-and-Linguistically-Diverse-Communities-2012>

References & Resources

- ▶ Zannettino, Bagshaw, Wendt & Adams, (2015) The role of emotional vulnerability and abuse in the financial exploitation of older people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia. *Journal of Elder Abuse Neglect*, 27(1), 74–89.
- ▶ Brisbane South Primary Health Network –Whole of Region Needs Assessment (2016)
- ▶ <http://www.bsphn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/WORNA-2016.pdf>
- ▶ National Aging & Aged Care Strategy for people from CALD backgrounds (2015)
https://agedcare.health.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1426/f/documents/07_2015/dss1582_aged_care_strategy_cal_d_a4_vaccessible.pdf
- ▶ Australian Association of Social Workers – Aging in Australia (2013),
<https://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/4356>

QUESTION & ANSWERS

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