

ELDER ABUSE PROFILE: WEST MORETON REGION

JULY 2007 – JUNE 2008



Prepared for the

The West Moreton Taskforce for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

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Lifeline

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EAPU HELPLINE DATA

EAPU collects non-identifiable data from across Queensland through the EAPU Helpline, and is able to produce region specific reports to broaden understanding of the nature and extent of elder abuse in the local area. Reports produced use data only from the Helpline. Therefore, this data may not convey the full extent of the issue in Queensland. Due to the personal and hidden nature of the issue of elder abuse many cases could be unreported and the actual numbers could be much higher.

Prevalence

There were 717 new cases of elder abuse across Queensland reported to the EAPU this financial year, 45 of which were from the West Moreton region. This is a 27% increase in the number of calls to the Helpline from this region compared to last year. Refer to Table 1 for a further breakdown.

Year	Reports for West Moreton	No of Statewide Reports
2003	9	402
2004	17	518
2005	20	508
2006	30	595
2007	33	596
2008	45	717

Table 1. No of Helpline elder abuse calls for the West Moreton region

The data in Table 1 is the number of reports made to the EAPU Helpline since 2003 through to the current 2007-2008 financial year. These figures do not include the number of follow-up calls or advocacy calls made on behalf of someone who called. The number of calls made for each reported elder abuse situation is actually higher, as shown in Table 2, below.

EAPU Helpline for the Gold Coast Region (1/7/2007 – 30/6/2008)	Incoming calls	Outgoing calls	All calls
Number of calls	58	33	91
Minutes	1422	275	1697
Hours	23.70	4.58	28.28
Average Length (mins)	24.52	8.33	18.65

Table 2. Call duration for reports on elder abuse received from the West Moreton region.

Abuse Types

Psychological abuse (N=22), of the elderly had the highest call rate to the EAPU Helpline, followed by financial abuse (N=11), (refer to Figures 1 and 2). It follows the trend in other regions.

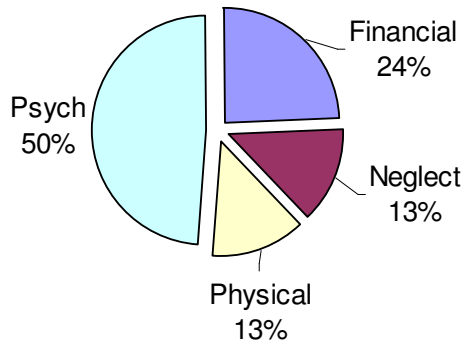


Figure 1. Abuse type breakdown for the West Moreton Region.

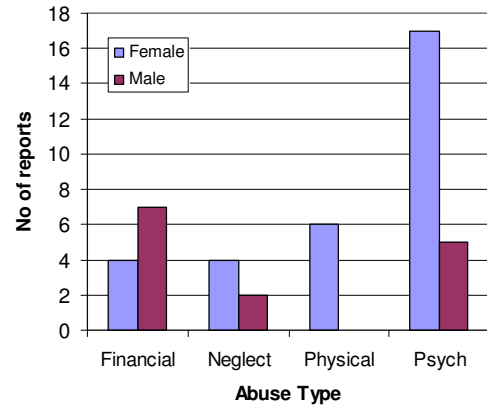


Figure 2. Abuse type for abused males and females

Abused

There were twice as many female (N=31) as male (N=14) victims of elder abuse in the West Moreton region, this financial year. 31% of elder abuse victims were between 60 and 74 years (N=14) and 49% were aged 80 and over (refer to Figure 3).

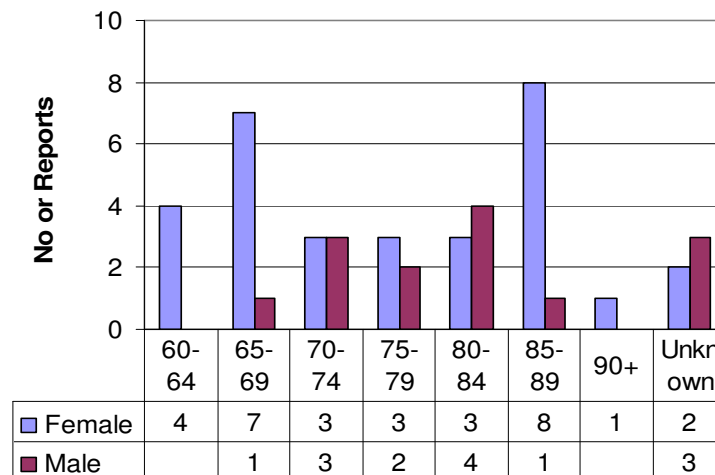


Figure 3. Ages of the abused persons on the West Moreton region reported to the EAPU Helpline.

Abusers

The EAPU undertook a review of the database at the end of 2007 and amended it to include an opportunity to capture data where the abuser was not in a relationship of trust with the older person. In these situations the gender or age of the abuser may not have been captured which would account for a higher record of unknowns. The new database took effect on 1 January 2008.

Family members made up 73% of reported alleged abusers of older people in the West Moreton Region. Adult sons and daughters are reported to be the majority of alleged abusers (53%). Refer to Table 2 and Figure 4.

Relationship	Financial	Neglect	Physical	Psych	Grand Total
No Relationship of Trust				1	1
Daughter	2		1	2	5
Friend	2			1	3
Grandchild				1	1
Neighbour				2	2
Other		1		1	2
Other Relative				4	4
Partner		2		2	4
Son	5	3	3	8	19
Worker	2		2		4
Grand Total	11	6	6	22	45

Table 3. Relationship of the abused to the abuser on the West Moreton region, for each form of primary abuse.

More males (71%, N=32) were alleged abusers than females (22%, N=10). 49% (N=22) of alleged abusers live with the victim. Figure 4 shows the relationship between the alleged abuser and the abused. The West Moreton region had similar trends reported to those of the whole of Queensland with sons and daughters being the most highly reported groups of abusers compared to other groups.

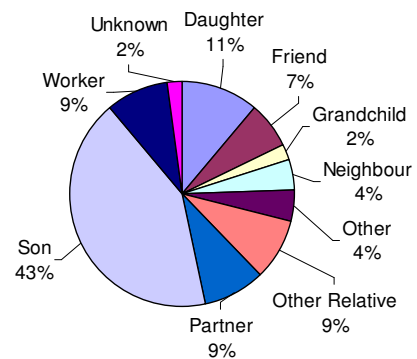


Figure 4. Relationship of the alleged abuser to the abused.

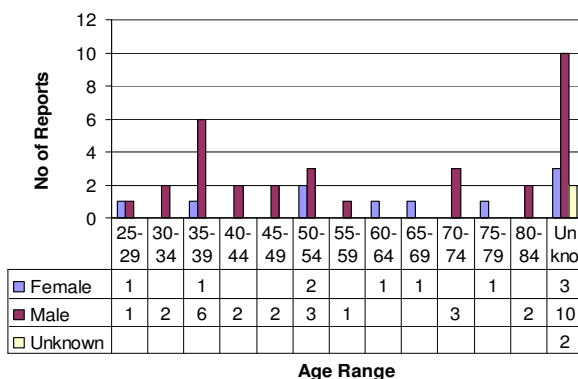


Figure 5. Age of the alleged abuser.

The main age groups of alleged abuser were the 35-39 years (17%) and 50-54 years (7%) as shown in Figure 5. These age groups are in keeping with the data displayed in Figure 4 showing that adult children were identified as the most prevalent relationship type to perpetrate abuse. The high rate of unknown ages can be attributed to the changes made to the database to include relationships where there wasn't an element of trust and often less information is known.

Notifiers

Notifiers of to the EAPU Helpline were mostly the older victim (N=11) seeking support and information on escaping the abusive situation (refer to Figure 6). Workers (N= 10) and daughters (N=6) were the next highest reporting categories, similar to trends from statewide data for 2007-2008.

Callers often found out about the EAPU Helpline from another service (N=14). A significant number of callers found out about the EAPU Helpline through the Telephone directory (N=6). Workers calling the Helpline said that they found out about the Helpline through professional knowledge (N=10). Refer to Figure 6.

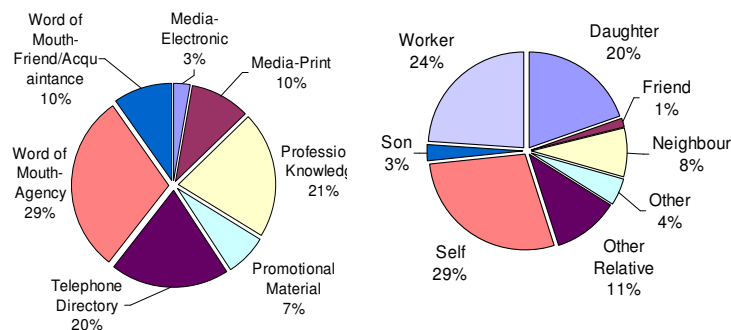


Figure 6. Notifiers of abuse and referral sources to the Helpline for the West Moreton region

Risk Factors

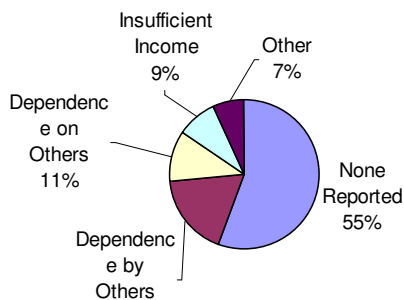


Figure 7. Financial risk factors of elder abuse

Financial risk factors for abuse can include the financial dependence of an older person upon other people or the financial dependence by others (usually adult children) upon the older person. Most calls did not report any type of financial risk. However, dependence either by the older person or by others on the older person were the most frequently recorded risk factors. (refer to Figure 7).

There were 31 reports where the abused person had a physical health risk factor (69%) and 19 reports where the older person presented with a psychological risk factor (42%).

Health risk factors may include both physical and psychological health. Figure 8 below shows the percentages of both forms of risk factors. There were 31 reports where the abused person had a physical health risk factor (69%) and 19 reports where the older person presented with a psychological risk factor (42%).

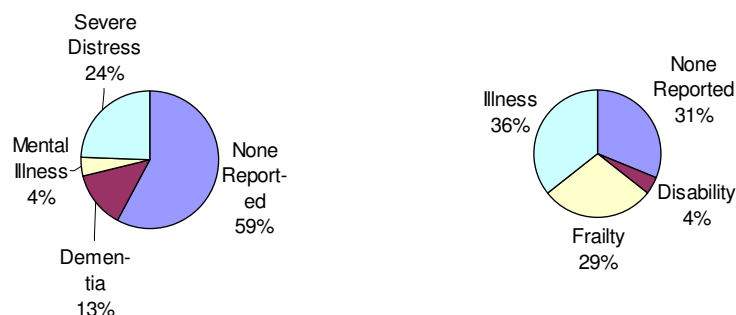


Figure 8. Psychological and physical health risk factors

Environmental risk factors included family conflict and isolation of the older person. Family conflict may be a history of domestic violence or child abuse which contributed to the ongoing or recent conflict within the family. There were 15 reports (33%) that identified both a family conflict issue and some form of isolation, refer to Table 4 below.

Isolation	Family Conflict			Grand Total
	None Reported	Ongoing	Recent	
None Reported	14	8	3	25
Isolation	1	8	1	10
Lack of Services	1		1	2
Lack of Support Networks	3	4		7
Unable to Access Services			1	1
Grand Total	19	20	6	45

Table 4. Family conflict and isolation risk factors of older people in the West Moreton Region.

Referrals

Referral Category	No of Referrals
Safety	27
Legal	13
Complaints & Disputes	4
Health	15
Capacity	16
Accommodation	2
Support & Advocacy	3
Counselling	15
General	12
Financial	6
Total:	113

There were 169 referrals made through the EAPU Helpline for calls from the West Moreton Region.

Table 5 is a collation of the referrals made between 01/07/07 and 31/12/07 by category. Referrals in regards to Safety (ie to the Police or a DV Service) made up 23% of referrals. Capacity referrals (ie to the Office of the Adult Guardian, Public Trustee, etc) made up 14%, while Counselling and Health referrals made up 13% each.

Table 6 lists referrals made between 01/01/08 and 30/06/08. Referrals to Seniors Legal and Support Service (SLASS) were the most common referrals made during this period (18%). It is important to note that although they attracted the greatest proportion of referrals there is no SLASS in the West Moreton region.

Seniors Legal and Support Service - Toowoomba	2	Police/DVLO	8	Aged Care Assessment Team	1
Seniors Legal and Support Service - Brisbane	8	Home Assist Secure	3	GP	3
Community Legal Centre	2	DV Service	5	Community Health	1
Queensland Legal Aid	2	Office of the Adult Guardian	3	Home and Community Care Service	1
Queensland Aged and Disability Advocacy - Legal	1	Public Trustee – Queensland	1	Hospital Social Worker	1
General Counselling	1	Guardianship and Administration Tribunal	2	Emergency Accommodation	1
Crisis Counselling	1	Other (2 were to EA Program through Ipswich Community Aid)	3	Department of Housing	1
EAPU	3	Older Persons Action Program	1	Seniors Enquiry Line	1

Table 6. Referrals made through the EAPU Helpline for calls received between 1 January 2008 and 30 June 2008 from the West Moreton Region.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

	Length of Session	Preparation Time	Travel Time	Total Time	Total Attended
Training	5	3	5.7	13.7	127
Awareness	3.8	2.25	6.7	12.75	140
Total	8.8	5.25	12.4	26.45	267

Table 7. Training and Awareness sessions provided by the EAPU in the West Moreton Region.

The EAPU provided 4 training and 5 awareness sessions in the West Moreton Region for this reporting year. Tanya van der Meer also provided training and awareness in the region during her time with Ipswich Community Aid on the Elder Abuse Project. Her efforts are greatly appreciated. A worker in the region has proven to be very beneficial in providing a community specific response and referrals.

CONCLUSION

This year has seen an increase in the number of calls to the EAPU Helpline across the State and also from the West Moreton region. The pilot legal services (Seniors Legal and Support Service) have been a great resource for referrals and have helped take the pressure off service providers. However, in many situations SLASS could only give advice over the phone due to geographical restrictions of their funding. Therefore, there is still a great need for a similar service to be established in the West Moreton region as is evident by the number of referrals to SLASS.

The EAPU has had a longstanding effective working relationship with the West Moreton Taskforce for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and has identified the importance of existing local services that specifically respond to senior's issues, in particular elder abuse. There is a gap in provision of direct case worker availability to provide hands-on support to older people experiencing abuse in West Moreton.

For more information or a copy of the EAPU 2007/08 Annual Report (statewide) contact the EAPU on 1300 651 192 or 07 3250 1836 or visit the website: www.eapu.com.au.