

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Saturday, 15 June is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Approximately 600,000 Australians are at risk of, or experiencing, elder abuse. Despite the scale of this human rights abuse, it garners insufficient attention in the wider community.

Elder abuse can be financial, emotional, psychological, physical, sexual, or social; and is often perpetrated by those closest to the older person. At its core, elder abuse is age discrimination and a failure to respect the rights and dignity of older persons.

An important part of our pro bono practice is assisting clients to obtain remedies for abuse they have suffered. Through this work we have assisted:

- clients made homeless, or at risk of homelessness, due to the actions of their children, children-in-law or children of deceased partners, usually through forced removal from housing without providing any financial compensation;
- clients whose Power of Attorney holders have sold their homes without the client receiving any of the proceeds, or misappropriated funds from bank accounts;

- parents whose children refuse to repay borrowed money, sometimes leaving the parents in serious poverty;
- with advice on claims on the estates of intestate spouses with hostile step-children; and
- to draft wills for clients without the interference from children who are subjecting the clients to financial control and social isolation.

We are pleased to partner with the Seniors Rights Service in Sydney, providing advice to older persons by attending a monthly clinic.

You can increase your awareness of elder abuse by visiting seniorsrightsservice.org.au/information/elder-abuse and contacting your local Seniors Rights Service if you, or someone you know, is a victim of elder abuse.

