

2009 WEAAD Report

“Recognising and Responding to Elder Abuse – Seminar for local government personnel and others who work with older adults.”

APEA: WA (The Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse) and Advocare Inc. Perth, Western Australia (Oceania Region)

Months of planning finally came to fruition on **15 June** when **APEA: WA (The Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse) and Advocare Inc.** hosted a seminar to mark **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)** at Woodvale Function Centre, north of Perth, Western Australia. The seminar title was **“Recognising and Responding to Elder Abuse - a seminar for local government personnel and others who work with older adults.”**

Widespread publicity, via electronic distribution lists, word of mouth and radio attracted over one hundred participants from a variety of government departments, service providers, community based organisations and the general public. The morning program was opened by Mr Greg Mahney, CEO Advocare Inc., and Chairperson of the Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (APEA: WA).



The Manager of Policy & Planning, Advocare Inc. presented the topic, “Introduction to Elder Abuse.” Two different perspectives on elder abuse were then given by

1. An Aboriginal advocate from Advocare Inc. who presented an Aboriginal perspective on elder abuse.
2. The Manager of the Chung Wah Community and Aged Care in Perth, who presented a culturally and linguistically diverse perspective on elder abuse.

The Senior Policy Officer from the Office of the Public Advocate then addressed the topic “How the Guardianship and Administration System can Assist” and the Public Trustee illustrated the role of the Public Trust Office.

Lunch was preceded by the launch of the Topic Sheet *“There’s No Excuse for Abuse”* by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Seniors and Volunteering.

A link to this document can be found at:

<http://www.community.wa.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/4F83B1E7-124C-4920-BC0E612F5A7BCE15/0/FactsheetElderAbuse2forweb.pdf>

Presentations from two WA police officers gave insights into:

- 1 Reporting of Elder Abuse, Responses to Elder abuse, Restraining Orders and Limits
- 2 Recognising, Reporting and Avoiding Financial Abuse

Representatives of the **Advocare Inc.** partner organisation, the **Older People’s Rights Service (OPRS)** spoke about “Recognising and Responding to Elder Abuse” including “Services, Case Types and Observations.” This section of the program was followed by a Case Study Panel comprising many of the previous speakers. The panel interacted well and encouraged lively discussion from the audience.

The final presentation for the day was given by the Executive Officer APEA: WA and addressed the topic “Does the Alliance have any relevance for service providers?”

Comments from participants at the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day seminar included the following:

- Multiple short, interesting sessions were good and helped to maintain interest;
- The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) perspective – very interesting insights;
- Great to have police talk as it has been an area that we often don’t hear about and would like to know more;
- Good case study presentation – very thought provoking questions and answers;
- Case study discussion provided practical, ‘hands-on’ information dealing with a variety of complex issues that affect elders in WA;
- Good liaison efforts, good networking;

Links to the presentations are available at www.advocare.org.au; and <http://apeawa.advocare.org.au>

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