Learnings from other perspectives and responses to abuse & mistreatment of vulnerable populations:
Elder Abuse, Domestic Violence, Child Protection & Safeguarding People with Disabilities

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Background & Context

- Who we are and why this area of focus
- Safer Services Project
- Strengthening focus on violence, abuse and mistreatment in the government, media and community
- What can we learn from other perspectives and responses to abuse & mistreatment of vulnerable populations?
Overview

- Counting the Cost: comparisons across groups
- Definitions and their relationship with findings and reports
- A life-span approach? Conceptualising the issue
- What can we learn from other perspectives and responses to abuse & mistreatment of vulnerable populations?
Counting the Cost

**Domestic Violence:** 36% women physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner (ANROWS, 2014). Economic cost - $13.6 billion (FaHCSIA, 2009)
Violence against women: key statistics

Research from the 2012 ABS Personal Safety Survey shows that both men and women in Australia experience substantial levels of violence. Australian women are most likely to experience physical and sexual violence in their home, at the hands of a male current or ex-partner.

36% of women had experienced physical or sexual violence from someone they knew.

61% had children in their care when the violence occurred, including 48% who stated the children had seen and heard the violence.

Of all Australian women aged 18 to 24, 23,584 reported they had experienced sexual assault in the 12 months prior to the survey.
Child Abuse: 1 in 37 received child protection orders. Indigenous children 7 x as likely to receive child protection services (AIHW, 2015). Economic cost $4 billion plus $6.7 billion (Taylor et al., 2008)
Child protection in Australia 2013–14

1 in 37 children received child protection services.

55,067 children were on care and protection orders.

Indigenous children were 7 times as likely as non-Indigenous children to receive child protection services.

Emotional abuse was the most common type of abuse.

Children from areas of lower socioeconomic status were more likely to be the subject of a substantiation.

9 in 10 children in out-of-home care were in relative/kinship care or foster care.

Nearly half of foster care households (49%) had multiple children placed.

Rates of children in substantiations, on care and protection orders, and in out-of-home care have increased since 2009–10.
Elder Abuse: 0.5-5% (Darzins et al., 2009). In QLD - Estimated financial abuse losses $97 million & hospital admissions $9.9-30.7 million (Jackson, 2009)

Abuse & Mistreatment of People with Disabilities: Estimated that 1.5 x more likely (Hughes et al. 2012) & 2 x for women with disabilities (Dowse et al., 2013).
Definitions: what is it and who is affected?
Conceptualising of abuse, violence and mistreatment across lifespan & society

What is missing?

Vulnerability/Disadvantage/Diversity

Abuse, Violence & Mistreatment

Interpersonal

Family/partner/carer

Child

Partner

Elder

Community

Acquaintance

Stranger

Paid/formal relationship

Friend/neighbour

Self-inflicted

Suicide

Self-harm

Self neglect

Collective

Social

Political

Economic

(adapted from Krug et al. 2002, p. 1082)
Responses

- Elder Abuse
  - State-based responses??

- Domestic Violence
  - National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022

- Child Abuse
  - National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009–2020

- Abuse & Mistreatment of People with Disabilities
  - National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 - 2.3: Develop strategies to reduce violence, abuse and neglect of people with disability’.

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Safer Services: Investing in the Protection of People with Disability

Two year collaborative project aiming to enhance the safety of people with disability by assisting disability service organisations and service users to increase their safeguarding capacity.

- Phase 1 (6 stages) 250 stakeholder participants
- Phase 2 (2 stages) 320 stakeholder participants
Where to from here?

Does elder abuse suffer from inherent ageism?

What do older people want?

Is there a better and more integrated way of responding to violence, abuse and mistreatment in our society?

How can we best benefit from the work being done in other areas?
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References


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