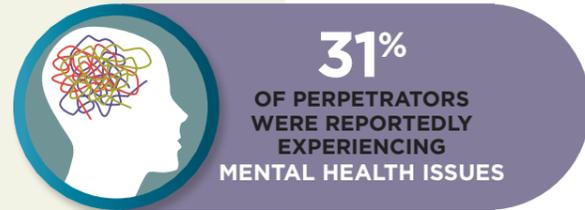
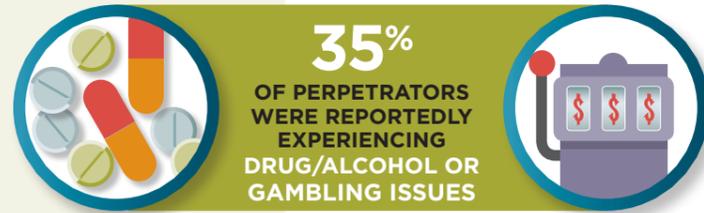


CONTRIBUTING FACTORS FOR THE ABUSER

Over the seven-year period there was a significant increase (of 17.35%) in the proportion of perpetrators experiencing mental illness and also in those with a gambling or substance abuse problem (increase of 7.05%).

The issue of perpetrators with complex needs has been an obvious and growing concern noted by SRV staff in their casework, and it is often a driving reason for older people to make contact with a service as they seek assistance for their family member.



EXTERNAL REFERRALS

% OF SRV ADVICE CLIENTS WERE REFERRED TO:



The older person may be referred to an external service as appropriate. Some clients who need ongoing assistance have a case opened and continue as a client of SRV.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations were made in the report for further research, improving data collection and better service provision for clients. **For the list of recommendations please see the full report.**

This report was prepared by the National Ageing Research Institute in collaboration with Seniors Rights Victoria. Seniors Rights Victoria is supported by the Victorian Government. This research project was funded by the State Trustees Australia Foundation.

NATIONAL AGEING RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SENIORS RIGHTS VICTORIA



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SEVEN YEARS OF ELDER ABUSE DATA IN VICTORIA

AUGUST 2020

INTRODUCTION

Seniors Rights Victoria provides an advice call service to older people who have experienced elder abuse. Extensive information is collected from the older person about their demographics, the elder abuse context and the perpetrator. Data for all advice call clients who experienced elder abuse over a seven-year period (July 2012 to June 2019) was for this report.

To access the full report, visit the Seniors Rights Victoria website at seniorsrights.org.au

ABOUT THE DATA IN THIS REPORT

During the seven-year period SRV made 3221 calls to older people who were eligible for, and requested, further advice.

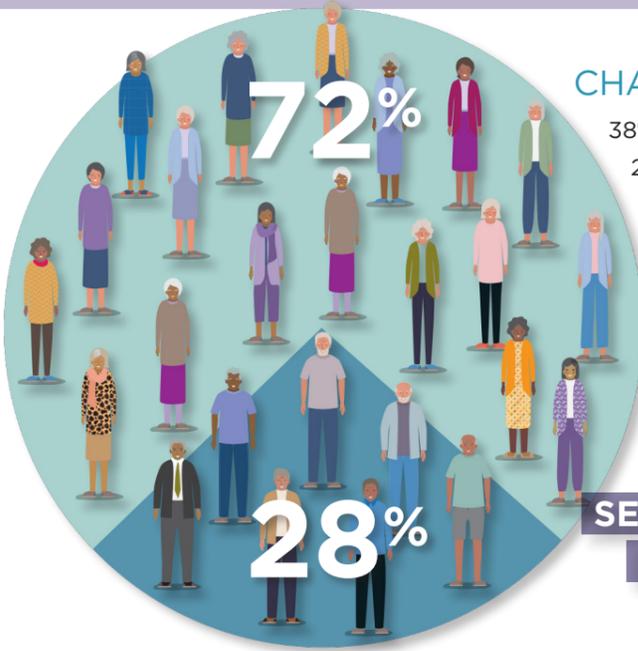
Of these, 2385 (74%) concerned at least one issue categorised by SRV advocates as abuse. Data relating to these 2385 clients were analysed for this report.

This data does not indicate prevalence of elder abuse in the community as was not derived from a statistically representative sample of the general population. It shows information about the demographic attributes, contextual factors and abusive experiences of people who have contacted the SRV service.

Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV) is the lead state-wide organisation tackling elder abuse in Victoria. SRV works to prevent elder abuse and safeguard the rights, dignity and independence of older people. SRV operates under the principles of empowerment of older people, working with individuals to increase their degree of self-determination, enabling them to represent their own interests and claim their rights.

ELDER ABUSE

Elder abuse is any act, or failure to act, which causes harm or distress to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust, such as a family member or friend. The abuse may be physical, social, financial, psychological or sexual and can include mistreatment and neglect. The World Health Organization describes elder abuse as a violation of human rights that can include abuse and serious loss of dignity and respect.



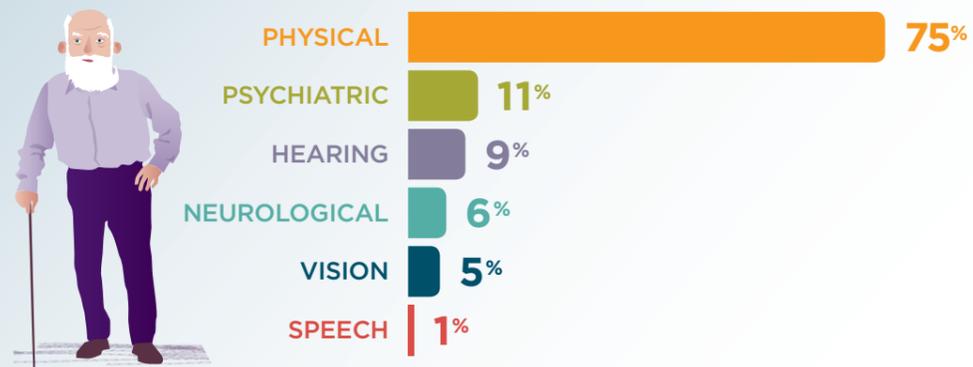
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OLDER PERSON

- 38% of clients were in their 70s
- 29% of clients were in their 80s
- 25% of clients were in their 60s

Over the seven-year period, women have consistently accounted for 72% of SRV advice call clients. As this is significantly out of proportion to the gender distribution of the Victorian population it indicates that there is a gendered element to elder abuse.

72% OF OLDER PEOPLE SEEKING ADVICE FROM SRV ARE WOMEN AND 28% ARE MEN

OF THE 60% OF CALLERS WHO HAD ONE OR MORE DISABILITIES:



Clients are asked whether they have any disabilities that affect their daily activities or communication. Almost 60% of clients at all time periods reported some form of disability.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS FOR THE OLDER PERSON

The existence of family conflict (43.94%) was the most common risk factor experienced by older clients and rose over time. The second most common risk factor was co-habitation (34.64%) with the perpetrator, though this is declining.

In almost 29% of cases the older person was frail or in poor physical health, while a similar proportion felt they did not have enough information about their rights.

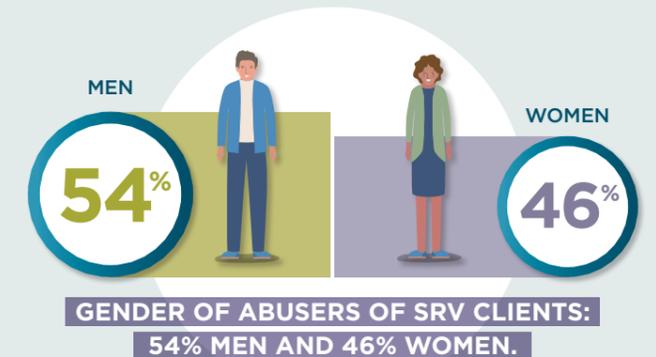
TYPES OF ABUSE

Psychological and physical abuse increased marginally between 2012-2014 and 2017-2019. Financial and social abuse increased substantially during the seven-year period.

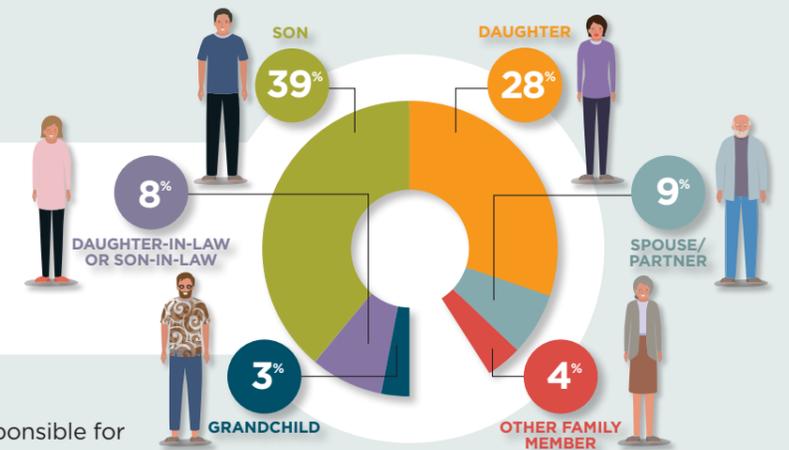


CHARACTERISTICS OF ABUSERS

The data indicates that although most abuse is committed by men, the incidence of abuse by women within this cohort of SRV clients is significant and rising. The proportion of female perpetrators increased from 42.83% in 2012-2014 to 47.30% in 2017-2019.



IN 91% OF SRV CASES THE ABUSER WAS A FAMILY MEMBER OF THE OLDER PERSON



Among SRV advice call clients, sons were responsible for a higher proportion of abuse than daughters, irrespective of living arrangements. Sons who lived with the older person reportedly committed more abuse than sons who did not live with the older person. Daughters who lived with the older person reportedly committed less abuse than daughters who did not live with the older person.

36% (35.56) OF OLDER PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCED ABUSE LIVED WITH THE PERPETRATOR

64% (64.44) OF OLDER PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCED ABUSE DID NOT LIVE WITH THE PERPETRATOR

