

South Australian Adult Safeguarding Unit



The Adult Safeguarding Unit is located in the Office for Ageing Well and has a strong focus on safeguarding the rights of adults at risk of abuse.

Key functions of the ASU include:

- > responding to reports of suspected or actual abuse of adults who may be vulnerable
- > providing support to safeguard the rights of adults experiencing abuse, tailored to their needs, wishes and circumstances
- > raising community awareness of strategies to safeguard the rights of adults who may be at risk of abuse

Reporting suspected or actual abuse to the ASU is voluntary however once a report has been made, the ASU is required to take action.

Anyone can make a report. You can remain anonymous if you wish.

Actions may include:

- > gathering more information about the situation and identifying appropriate supports or safeguards
- > referring to another more relevant service

At all times, the ASU will balance the need to intervene, with the adult's right to autonomy and self-determination. We will work with the adult at risk, with their consent, before any safeguarding action is taken.

For the first three years of operation, the Unit will respond to reports or concerns of abuse or neglect in relation to people aged 65 years and over, and 50 years and over for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. From 2022, the Unit will work with all adults who may be vulnerable to abuse, regardless of age.

Did you know?

Around 1 in 20 older Australians experiences abuse from a person they know and trust, such as a family member, friend, carer, or neighbour. It can occur at home, in places visited regularly, or where services or care are accessed. However, abuse can often remain hidden and continue without any suspicions being aroused.

What is abuse?

Abuse is any deliberate or unintentional action, or lack of action, by a person, often in a trusted relationship, which causes distress and/or harm to a person who may be vulnerable, or causes loss or damage to property or assets.

What does abuse look like?

The behaviours and signs of abuse can include, but are not limited to:



Physical abuse: being hit or injured on purpose, restraining someone inappropriately;



Emotional abuse: intimidation, threats, humiliation, extortion, racial, verbal or psychological abuse;



Sexual abuse: involvement in a sexual activity which is unwanted or not understood, unwanted sexual attention;



Financial abuse: the theft or misuse of money, property or personal possessions including any pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance;



Neglect: not providing food, clothing, attention or care. Withholding of aids or equipment (continence, walking, hearing, glasses), putting someone at risk of infection, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care.



What can I do?

Call the ASU via the **SA Elder Abuse Prevention Phone Line** on **1800 372 310**, Mon to Fri, 9am-5pm
Email ASU at stopelderabuse@sa.gov.au

Contact the **Translating & Interpreter Services (TIS)** on **131 450** if you require an interpreter to speak with the ASU.

Anyone can make a report and you can remain anonymous if you wish.

The ASU is not an emergency/crisis service. Dial 000 for emergencies.

Further information

Read the **SA Charter of the Rights and Freedoms of Vulnerable Adults** and **ASU Code of Practice** at www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/adultsafeguardingunit

Other Advice and Support Services
SA Police or SA Ambulance Service (emergencies only) **000**

SA Police (for non-urgent Police assistance) **131 444**

Mental Health Triage **13 14 65**

Domestic Violence and Aboriginal Family Violence Gateway **1800 800 098**

Lifeline **13 11 14**