



Conversation Prompts

for identifying elder abuse

GENTLE QUESTIONS

How are things going at home?

How do you spend your days?

How do you feel about the amount of help you receive at home?

How do you feel your carer/family are managing?

How are you managing financially?

Are you feeling happy and comfortable with your current situation?

DIRECT QUESTIONS

Are you feeling safe?

Are you afraid of anyone at home?

Has anyone ever made you do things you didn't want to do?

Has anyone ever touched you without consent?

Has anyone ever shouted at you or threatened you?

Has anyone ever taken anything that was yours without your consent?

Have you ever signed any documents that you didn't understand?

Has anyone ever failed to help you when you needed help?

RESPONDING TO ELDER ABUSE

Listen, validate and believe the person's disclosures.

Adapt your communication style to suit individual needs.

Acknowledge.

Be empathic and nonjudgmental.

Validate and inform the patient:

- You are not alone.
- You are not to blame for the abuse.
- You deserve to be safe.
- You have the right to live free of fear and abuse.

Respect and empower the person to make their own choices and decisions.

Undertake a safety and risk assessment, and ask for consent to make an urgent referral to the Seniors Legal and Support Service (SLASS) if required.

REFERRALS TO SLASS

Potential or suggested spiels for referrals to SLASS.

For general legal or social work service

The Seniors Legal and Support Service is a free legal and social work service for people who experience or are at risk of experiencing elder abuse.



Conversation Prompts for identifying elder abuse

This service is based in Brisbane, however, we may be able to put you in contact with another service in your area and provide you with some other relevant information.

For persons identified as at risk of or experiencing elder abuse

‘Some of the things you have shared with me are concerning. You have a right to be safe. I am not suggesting that you are experiencing elder abuse, but it may be helpful to get some advice about your situation so you can make the best and informed decision about what you could do next, even if that is to do nothing.’

For preventative measures

‘It is important for you to have all the information you need before you (insert scenario here for example) make an enduring power of attorney, or move in with your son or daughter. A conversation with a lawyer can help you to ensure you understand your options.’

PATHWAYS FOR HELP

Secondary consultation

‘I can obtain some legal information from the lawyer for you without telling them your personal information, and get back to you about what they say.’

Direct referral to the Seniors Legal and Support Service

‘If you agree, I can ask the lawyer and social worker to phone you and provide you with legal advice or information. To do that, I will

need to provide them with your name, date of birth and contact details, and also the name and date of birth of the other person involved so they can do a conflict check.’

‘They can provide you with options and information, and help you to understand your rights. They will not act without your consent and will not contact anyone in your case without your permission. It is a confidential service.’

‘After hearing from them, you can make your decision about what you would like to do next, which may include, not doing anything.’

It is helpful for us to know if there is a preferred time or phone number to call the person (e.g. when the abuser is not at home, or to not call the landline as the abuser will answer that phone).’

It is always good practice to remind people to call police in cases of an emergency.

Information to ask the person once consent is granted for a referral

The lawyer needs the full name and date of birth of the person, and the full name of the potential abuser.

The SLASS lawyer has professional obligations to safeguard the privacy, impartiality and confidentiality of the legal advice provided to the clients.

The SLASS lawyer will use this information to do a conflict check on their data base.



Conversation Prompts for identifying elder abuse

The SLASS lawyer needs to do this to ensure that there is no conflict of interest.

Seniors Legal and Support Service brochure

If the person does not want to pursue either of the options mentioned above, you can send them a brochure about the SLASS service and tell them that they can contact us themselves for more information if they need more time to think about it.

For further information contact the Seniors Legal and Support Service at Caxton Community Legal Cent

CAXTON COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE

© Copyright Caxton Community Legal Centre

Turbot Place
Level 23, 179 Turbot Street

P (07) 3214 6333

F (07) 3846 7483

W caxton.org.au

This information is current at April 2024.

