

22 June 2018

## Pledge to report elder abuse in south western Sydney

Older people are front and centre in a joint commitment to end elder abuse between South Western Sydney Local Health District, police, aged care and health representatives.

To mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on Friday 15 June, Amanda Larkin, the District's Chief Executive signed a Statement of Commitment alongside representatives from the NSW Police Force, Aged Care, Multicultural Health, Aboriginal Health and National LGBTI Health Alliance Silver Rainbow.

"South Western Sydney Local Health District has stood up against elder abuse and sent a message that harm against older people is not acceptable at any time," Ms Larkin said.

"We have shown our determination to report elder abuse by the signing of a Statement of Commitment.

"It is heartbreaking that when many older people reach the time in their lives for relaxation, some are instead faced with cruelty and unkindness rather than love and respect."

Elder abuse can take many forms including financial, psychological, physical, social or sexual and can include mistreatment or neglect.

Warning signs of elder abuse may include fear, anxiety, injuries, absence of personal care, unexplained financial transactions and changes to a will.

Ms Larkin said as few as one in five cases of elder abuse are reported to authorities.

"Like other forms of family violence, elder abuse often occurs behind closed doors," she said.

"Awareness days like World Elder Abuse Awareness Day help bring this issue out into the open so we can do something about it.

"There are many ways we can stop elder abuse, most simply by keeping in touch with our older family members and friends and asking if they are okay."

The NSW Elder Abuse Helpline provides information, support and referrals for victims and their family and friends.

In the past 12 months it took more than 250 calls for help from older residents in south western Sydney.

Anyone with concerns about elder abuse can contact the helpline on 1800 628 221 or visit [www.elderabusehelpline.com.au](http://www.elderabusehelpline.com.au).