

Executive Summary

On 10 December 2024 the Legislative Assembly referred the inquiry into elder abuse (the inquiry) in Queensland to the Education, Arts and Communities Committee. This report outlines key issues and evidence gathered during the consultation process.

The committee engaged extensively, hearing from 124 witnesses across 16 locations in Queensland and receiving briefings from both Queensland and Australian government agencies. Submissions were received from numerous organisations, peak bodies, independent entities, academics and community groups.

Elder abuse often occurs in private settings, frequently within families, and remains underreported due to victims' reluctance or lack of awareness. The committee acknowledges the courage of individuals who shared their experiences.

Evidence indicates that elder abuse stems from a complex and evolving environment, marked by ambiguous definitions and diverse causes. Contributing factors include family stress, social isolation and financial pressures. The committee also noted pervasive ageism, whereby older people are at once undervalued yet expected to share their assets with younger generations.

Data collection by government and funded services was found to be inadequate, inconsistent, and poorly integrated across agencies. While there are vital and effective state and national entities working toward prevention, meaningful reform requires a coordinated, whole-of-government approach.

In addition to recommending that the Legislative Assembly note the report, the committee made 15 recommendations, found at page ix of this report, around the following key themes, to:

- improve data collection, management and reporting
- strengthen Queensland's elder abuse prevention and response frameworks
- collaborate at a national level to ensure consistent reform.