

## Terms of Reference

### 1. BACKGROUND

Elder abuse is any form of violence or mistreatment that causes harm to an older person and occurs within a relationship of trust. Elder abuse can include acts of psychological, financial, physical, social and sexual abuse, as well as neglect.

Elder abuse is acknowledged as a form of family violence in the recommendations of the Victorian Royal Commission on Family Violence. It is similar to other forms of family violence in that it occurs within the family or domestic context but also includes abuse perpetrated by other trusted support people. Elder abuse depends on the exercise of power and control by the perpetrator. At the same time, it affects older men and women. It can occur between generations - being carried out by sons, daughters and other trusted relatives as well as intimate partners or unpaid carers. In common with other forms of family violence, elder abuse prevention and response requires multiple reinforcing strategies.

Ageism, and the way people are treated differently as they age, is considered to be a significant driver of elder abuse. Ageism results in older people being marginalised and afforded less power and social status.

The prevention of elder abuse is important given the rising number of older people in Australia, the lack of awareness of ageism, the lack of reporting, the difficulty of resolving problems once they happen and the damage to family relationships that can occur.

### PURPOSE

The Victorian Government has funded the establishment of the Southern Melbourne Elder Abuse Prevention Network (SMEAPN), which operates at the community level and focuses on the **primary prevention** of elder abuse.

The purpose of the SMEAPN Steering Committee is to create awareness of ageism and to influence and provide direction for implementing primary prevention strategies within the Southern Melbourne catchment.

### FUNCTION

The Steering Committee brings together individuals possessing the relevant knowledge and skills to act individually or collectively to undertake assigned tasks and activities to achieve the network's operational objectives. These objectives are outlined in a work plan, which describes the key deliverables of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and guides network activities.

The Steering Committee will direct, where appropriate, the formation of task groups to achieve specific project outcomes. This includes, but is not limited to, community engagement and awareness activities that reach and involve a wide range of community members and organisations and the utilisation of a co-design approach.

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### 2. OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES

- To convene a network of professionals and community representatives motivated to prevent elder abuse in their local community
- To explore the causes of elder abuse and work on targeted and inclusive activities aimed to create awareness of ageism and change social attitudes to prevent abuse and violence against older people
- To conduct activities individually and collectively with community members to raise awareness of elder abuse and where to go for help.

### 3. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- To host and support the SMEAPN
- To oversee the activities of the task groups
- To guide the strategic direction of the SMEAPN
- To recruit new network members to replace organisations that can no longer support the initiative
- To educate community members about ageism, elder abuse and its prevention
- To support and facilitate community consultation on all SMEAPN activities
- To enhance community and government understanding of elder abuse prevention
- To identify, as a partnership, opportunities for primary prevention of elder abuse within the Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston, Port Phillip and Stonnington communities
- To encourage and support partnerships between local, regional, state-wide and national organisations
- To engage older people, their families, carers and the general community within the SMEAPN catchment to raise awareness of elder abuse, its prevention and referral pathways
- To engage older members of at-risk communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer and questioning plus (LGBTIQ+) and Disability communities, their families and carers to establish culturally appropriate approaches to raising awareness of elder abuse, its prevention and referral pathways.
- To implement awareness campaigns incorporating statewide messaging addressing ageism and overall awareness of elder abuse
- To advocate for resources to support the sustainability of initiatives and increase the impact of awareness raising initiatives.
- To support and develop local community champions who will promote prevention messages of the initiative within their communities.

### 4. MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

- The membership of the SMEAPN is reviewed annually in August.

Bayside City Council	Glen Eira City Council
Better Place Australia	Highbury Neighbourhood House
Bolton Clarke	Jewish Care
City of Port Phillip	MiCare
Caulfield Community Health Service	Monash Health
Central Bayside Community Health Services	PRONIA
Community representatives	Victoria Police
City of Kingston	Women's Health in the South East

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### 5. OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS

#### Meetings:

- To be held every six weeks commencing 30 August 2022.

#### Venue of meetings:

- Microsoft Teams
- Changes to meeting time, frequency or venue will be at the discretion of the SMEAPN Steering Committee

#### Agenda:

- The SMEAPN Project Officer will develop Agendas in consultation with the Chair. SMEAPN Steering Committee members are encouraged to contribute items to the agenda for consideration.
- Agendas will be distributed by email to members one week prior to meetings.

#### Minutes:

- Minutes will be taken by the SMEAPN Project Officer and distributed no later than two weeks after each meeting has been held.

#### Quorum:

- A quorum will be achieved if 50% **plus one** of the agencies represented on the SMEAPN Steering Committee are present. If a quorum is not reached, the meeting can proceed with items to be ratified at the next meeting.

#### Auspicings:

- The SMEAPN Steering Committee is auspiced by Better Place Australia.

#### Reporting:

- The SMEAPN Steering Committee reports directly to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) via Betty Tzouvelis, Manager of Elder Abuse Reform.

### 6. KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Role of the SMEAPN Steering Committee Chair: Graeme Westaway, Better Place Australia

- The chairperson will be elected for a term of one year.
- The chairperson will:
  - Chair the meeting
  - Assist with the development of the Agenda
  - Approve Minutes prior to distribution
  - Provide support to the SMEAPN Project Officer
  - Liaise with members of the SMEAPN Steering Committee
  - Provide orientation for new members with the SMEAPN Project Officer
  - Attend DFFH meetings as required
  - Represent the SMEAPN at meetings, consultations and presentations as required

#### Role of the SMEAPN Steering Committee Deputy Chair: Kerry Rendell, Bolton Clarke

- The deputy chairperson will be elected for a term of one year.
- The deputy chairperson will:
  - Perform the role of the chair in the absence of the chair
  - Provide support to the chair in carrying out the duties of the chair

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- Carry out approvals and actions as required by the chair where the chair has a conflict of interest
- Assist the Chairperson in deciding which matters are dealt with by the full Committee and delegated to Task Groups
- Represent the Steering Committee at meetings and forums as agreed with by the Chairperson
- Other duties as nominated by the Chairperson and/or Committee
- Provide support to the SMEAPN Project Officer
- Liaise with members of the SMEAPN Steering Committee

### Role of the Committee members

- Each member organisation will provide a nominated representative
- The nominated representative will attend meetings and provide advice from their organisation's perspective.
- Committee members will communicate the SMEAPN Steering Committee's activities within their organisation.
- A substitute representative must be nominated if the committee member cannot attend a meeting. The committee member will brief the substitute member before meeting attendance. The committee member will inform the SMEAPN Project Officer of the substitute member before the meeting.
- Members agree to devote time to and accept responsibility for addressing the Operational Objectives
- Members will provide support to the Chair and SMEAPN Project Officer
- Members will establish, attend and support task groups for specific projects and priorities
- Other agencies and individuals may be invited to join the group or attend meetings for a specific purpose as deemed appropriate.

## 7. DECISION MAKING

### Decision Making Process:

- Decisions will be made based on common agreement. If this cannot be achieved, a simple majority vote will resolve the decision.
- When voting is required, only one vote per agency will be counted.

## 8. REVISION

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed at twelve monthly intervals.

### **Ratified by SMEAPN Steering Committee:**

Date: 27 /02/2018

### **Revision ratified by SMEAPN Steering Committee:**

Date: 29/11/2022

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## Terms of Reference

### Revision History:

Next revision date	Completion date	Summary of changes
February 2019	April 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated member list</li> <li>• Updated venue – Parkdale only</li> <li>• Working groups updated</li> <li>• Updated objectives</li> </ul>
February 2020	March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated member list</li> <li>• Updated meeting room location</li> <li>• Working groups updated</li> </ul>
February 2021	August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Merged TOR with that of Action Group</li> <li>• Added specific functions</li> <li>• Updated member list</li> <li>• Updated venue – Microsoft Teams</li> <li>• Updated objectives</li> <li>• Modified meeting frequency</li> <li>• Addition of Deputy Chair role</li> </ul>
April 2022	November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Steering Committee name</li> <li>• Updated background</li> <li>• Updated purpose</li> <li>• Updated objectives</li> <li>• Update operational functions</li> <li>• Updated reporting</li> </ul>