

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Commissioner Susan Ryan Launches Behind the Curtain: Elder Abuse Video for GPs

The Age Discrimination Commissioner Susan Ryan will launch the video *Behind the Curtain* at (what room) St Vincent's Hospital at 2pm on Wednesday 9 December, 2015. The short two-minute video about elder abuse was created by Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC) to help educate GPs about indicators of family violence and services and referral information. The video, which was created with funds from the former Inner East Melbourne Medicare Local, tells the story of Anna who begins to experience elder abuse after family members move interstate.

ECLC's Elder Abuse Prevention Advocate Kaz McKay explains that primary health providers play an important role in assisting someone experiencing elder abuse.

"Very often, a GP is the only professional that an older person will disclose their abuse to, yet few GP's seem to understand elder abuse or have knowledge of appropriate local services to refer their patients to," said Ms McKay.

Elder abuse is growing issue for Australia. 6% of all Australians will experience some form of family violence, a figure that equates to 188,000 people. Elder abuse is any act of harm to an older person that is committed by someone with whom the older person has a relationship of trust such as a partner, family member or friend. This can take the form of financial, psychological and physical abuse.

Eastern Community Legal Centre CEO Michael Smith explains that part of the silence and complexity around elder abuse is the reluctance that many people who are experiencing the abuse to take action or criticise their adult children and relatives.

"Our lawyers often find that clients who are suffering from elder abuse do not want to press charges against their own adult child. Most do not want to view the behaviour as abuse," said Mr Smith.

View the video here: <http://eclc.org.au/community-development/partnerships-and-projects/elderabuse>

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