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UnitingCare Australia renews call to end elder abuse

Today marks World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, an important time to renew our commitment to end elder abuse. Today and every day we must stand against ageism and inequality in our society, especially in the wake of COVID-19.

This year we particularly acknowledge our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders and the scarcity of culturally appropriate services. These elders are subject to complex factors that increase their vulnerability to premature ageing and reduced life expectancy.

“Recognising and upholding the rights of our elders to independence and autonomy is the only way that we, as a society, can ensure that individuals in our community are not vulnerable because of their age” said National Director, Ms Claerwen Little.

UnitingCare Australia’s service network is one of the largest non-government providers of aged care services nationally.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has given us new insights into how communities can be genuinely caring and inclusive of our elders when they need a hand. Many in the community services sector are, however, concerned that elders who are vulnerable to abuse and neglect will be even more exposed as the economic fallout from the pandemic comes into play”.

“This is why we call on the Government to ensure that a more equal and fair society is part of the solution to ending all forms of abuse and neglect. Measures to enhance the experience of older people who need care must be part of this solution. We need a broader plan of attack on ageism, as pointed out by the Aged Care Royal Commission.

“At UnitingCare Australia we have seen the Royal Commission as an opportunity to create stronger communities and to ensure that people have the greatest choice possible about where and how they approach their life as they age. We look forward to the Commission’s final report and recommendations” Ms Little said.

The Uniting Church and its service providers believe in finding positive ways of adjusting to social change that benefit all people throughout their lives. The right to be treated justly, accorded dignity and to have your basic rights protected applies to everyone, regardless of age, gender, cultural origin, sexuality or beliefs.

UnitingCare Australia’s submissions to the Royal Commission, including our vision for an ageing Australia *Ageing to our Full Potential*, are [available on our website](#).

The UnitingCare network is one of the largest network of social services providers in Australia, supporting 1.4 million people every year across urban, rural and remote communities and powered by over 50,000 staff and 30,000 volunteers.

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