

MEDIA RELEASE

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Hypothetical to Tackle Elder Abuse Issues

Abuse of older people appears to be on the rise in Australia. It is currently estimated that between 2% and 14% of older Australians experience abuse in any given year, with the prevalence of neglect possibly higher (Australian Government – Australian Institute of Family Studies [AIFS]).

In response to this concerning trend, a number of community and government organisations have come together to establish networks in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven to work collaboratively to address the issue.

In the Illawarra, the Prevention of Older Person Abuse (POPA) network comprises of representatives from an extensive number of government and non-government organisations, including Local Government, Health, Police and Aged Care providers. The network is supported by Community Industry Group.

In the Shoalhaven, the Shoalhaven Elder Abuse Prevention and Awareness Network (SEAPAN) attracts a similar membership.

SEAPAN and POPA have come together to showcase the issue through Expos to be held in the Shoalhaven and in Shellharbour. Community Industry Group CEO Nicky Sloan said, “The aim of the Expo is to explore the issues associated with elder abuse. Attendees will learn to recognise the signs of abuse of older people, and most importantly how to respond effectively.”

“We are very excited to present the issue in the form of a Hypothetical,” added Christine Racar, Policy and Project Officer for Community Industry Group. “The hypothetical will feature a panel of specialists and service providers who will explore a case study to demonstrate the role of various organisations in recognising and responding to older people who are victims of abuse.”

“Abuse takes many forms,” Nicky Sloan said. “Research shows that financial abuse is the most common form of abuse experienced by older people. But incidence of physical abuse and psychological abuse are also concerning. As family members are often involved, much of this goes unreported either due to fear or shame.”

“Sadly, the problem remains largely hidden,” said Christine Racar. “We hope that these Expos and Hypotheticals will help inform the carers and workers who support older people, particularly those in their own homes, and give them avenues to seek support.”

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Managers and staff from Aged Care organisations are strongly encouraged to attend these free events.

Event Details:

Shoalhaven:

Date: Wednesday 16 October

Time: 1pm – 4pm

Venue: Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, 42 Bridge Rd, Nowra

Bookings [here](#)

Shellharbour:

Date: Thursday 17 October

Time: 10am – 1pm

Venue: Shellharbour Civic Centre, 76 Cygnet Ave, Shellharbour City Centre

Bookings [here](#)

About the Community Industry Group

Community Industry (formerly known as Illawarra Forum) is the peak body working for community services and organisations in the South East of NSW. It supports community organisations, promotes expertise and innovation in community development, fosters industry development and provides advocacy for social justice. Community Industry Group is an independent organisation governed by a committee of management elected annually by the membership.

Community Industry Group represents the non-government community services industry in the South East of NSW, which consists of approximately 300 organisations, and works closely with numerous organisations which provide support to vulnerable people across the region.

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