



National collaboration unites 26 organisations to tackle financial abuse of older Australians

13 October 2026

Key Facts:

- Organisations from banking, superannuation, financial services, legal, community and government sectors have formed the Financial Abuse of Older People Action Collaborative.
- Around 1 in 6 older Australians experience abuse.
- Age Discrimination Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald AM emphasised that no single organisation or sector can tackle financial elder abuse alone, calling for coordinated action across the financial sector as reported cases escalate nationally.
- Council on the Ageing (COTA) Australia's CEO Pat Sparrow said responsibility for preventing financial abuse should not fall on older people alone.

Twenty-six organisations from the banking, superannuation, financial services, legal, community and government sectors have joined forces to strengthen Australia's response to financial abuse of older people.

The Financial Abuse of Older People Action Collaborative (Action Collaborative), led by the Australian Human Rights Commission with funding from the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, recently met for the first time, bringing together organisations from across Australia to drive practical action to better identify, respond and prevent financial abuse.

The Action Collaborative builds on the Commission's Financial Elder Abuse Project 2023-2024 and supports the National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2026-2036.

Around 1 in 6 older Australians experience abuse, including financial abuse. With increasing cost-of-living pressures, delays in intergenerational wealth transfer, and growing concerns about ‘inheritance impatience’, the risk and incidence of financial abuse is expected to rise rapidly.

Age Discrimination Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald AM said tackling financial abuse requires action across sectors.

‘Older Australians have the right to live with dignity, be protected from financial abuse, and empowered to exercise control over their future. No single organisation or sector can solve financial elder abuse alone. We must build the momentum for real action in all parts of the financial sector, as the level of reported financial abuse escalates across the nation,’ he said.

By bringing committed leaders together from every area of the financial sector, we can deliver practical changes that prevent it and ensure we are better equipped to respond to it.’

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Australia’s CEO Pat Sparrow said responsibility for preventing financial abuse should not fall on older people alone.

‘Requiring older people to become experts on how to protect their financial transactions across complex, imperfect systems is wrong,’ Ms Sparrow said.

We need to hear their experiences and challenges, respect their autonomy and analysis this as a community and business problem we can address.’

Commonwealth Bank (CBA) Head of Customer Vulnerability Caroline Wall said CBA are committed to taking action.

‘The leadership by the Commission has helped bring national attention to the scale and complexity of elder financial abuse while also highlighting the importance of a coordinated response across sectors,’ Ms Wall said.

‘Conversations have reinforced the significant harm caused by the financial abuse of older people and the opportunity for the sectors to work together on prevention, early intervention, awareness, capability building and system reform.’

The Action Collaborative will be led by a core working group, with opportunities for other organisations and community members to participate through a broader network. More information will be available on the Commission’s website.

Core working group organisations include:

1. Association of Superannuation Funds Australia (ASFA)
2. Attorney General’s Department, Federal Government

3. Australian Banking Association (ABA)
4. Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA)
5. Australian Human Rights Commission
6. Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC)
7. Banking Code Compliance Committee (BCCC)
8. Caxton Legal Centre (QLD)
9. Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand (CAANZ)
10. Commonwealth Bank (CBA)
11. Council on the Ageing Australia (COTA)
12. Customer Owned Banking Association (COBA)
13. Eastern Community Legal Centre (Victoria)
14. Elder Abuse Action Australia (EAAA)
15. Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA)
16. Financial Advice Association Australia (FAAA)
17. Financial Counselling Australia
18. Financial Services Council
19. Justice Connect (NSW)
20. National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Ageing & Aged Care Council (NATSIAACC)
21. NSW Ageing and Disability Commission
22. Office of the Public Advocate (QLD)
23. Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)
24. Regional Bank Australia
25. Super Consumers Association
26. Westpac

Help is Available: If you are concerned about elder abuse and need information, call the National Elder Abuse phone line on 1800ELDER Help (1800 353 374).

ENDS | Media contact: media@humanrights.gov.au or **0457 281 897**

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