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Executive Summary

Family violence is a pattern of assaultive behaviours, including physical, sexual and psychological, that individuals use against their family members or intimate partners. “EA refers to an intentional act or omission occurring in a relationship of trust that causes harm or serious risk of harm to an older adult or deprives an older adult of basic needs (Burnes, Rizzo, Gorroochurn, Pollack, Lachs, 2014)”.

Elder abuse is new to research, but has existed in society for centuries. During the last decade, observers have noted that Elder Abuse and mistreatment has been all around in various countries (Wallace & Bonnie, 2003), emphasizing the problem will play an important part in rejecting this negative behaviour. While the issue continues to get its momentum, it is less likely to achieve a short-term solution.

Elder abuse is commonly perpetrated by family members in a caregiving role. The most common perpetrator is either a spouse, child, daughter/son-in-law or a grandchild. This adds an emotional complexity to the situation, especially when coupled with end-of-life issues as well. As a result of this victims are often very reluctant to seek assistance, especially from protective service personnel. Common reasons for an elder to decline police intervention include

- Fragility of old age
- Vulnerability of old age
- Preserving family relationships
- Protecting the family member (perpetrator) from police
- Maintain a sense of status quo.

preserving family relationships, protecting the family member (perpetrator) from police/justice system and to maintain a sense of status quo.

Our research indicated that the incidence of elder abuse is set to increase in the future. This is because Australia’s population is aging. In the five years from 2008-2013 the number of Australian’s aged 65+ grew by 533,000 (up 19%) to 3.34 million people (ABS, 2015). Current life expectancy for an Australian child born in 2011 is 79.9 years and a female is 84.3 years (ABS, 2015).

In our community many elders are abused in their homes, in roads, or even in their care centres. Because of their physical condition, they are less able to stand up and speak up or fight for this type of negative behaviour. Elderly people in interdependent cultures are more introvert and reluctant to talk about any type of neglectful attitudes towards them by their family members.

The majority of current funding initiatives and media attention is focussed on protecting and helping “at risk” women aged 20-50 and their children. As such other marginalized populations are overlooked or underserved. One such group is the elders within our society (Band-Winterstein, Goldblatt, & Alon, 2014).

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- Our research has revealed that low social support is a risk factor in all forms of abuse / mistreatment and more than tripled the likelihood of underreporting to police.

Social marketing strategies can be used to help encourage voluntary behaviour change. Social marketing will be very useful to help develop activities aimed at eliminating, reducing, modifying, accepting, rejecting, maintaining or bring about any change in people's behaviour for the benefit of individuals and society as a whole. Formulating a meaningful social marketing concept is necessary here to support the ongoing safety and wellbeing of elder people affected in Victoria. In order to effectively promote the new violence free voluntary behaviour (social marketing product) certain promotional activities may be utilised.

Suggested Anti Elder Violence aware campaign could be implemented through the following methods:

- Victim storytelling – Having past victims of elder violence retell their stories to Australians to give them perspective and understanding as to the impact their actions can have on elders.
- Government Advertising – Using graphic recreations of family violence against elders to create a damning social image for the exhibition of such behaviour.
- Social Media Awareness – Using social media is a powerful tool to convey a message and product, therefore using Facebook and Twitter can be used to gain public support for the change. Additionally these mediums can be used to spread information regarding the health issues resultant from violence.

The authors of this report are available for clarification of any issues identified in this report. The researchers are also available for consultation via the expert round table discussions sessions, should this be deemed appropriate.

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Question one

Are there other goals the Royal Commission should consider?

Royal commission should extend the stream of 'Family Violence', to understand the prevalence of the problem and formulate new goals. Family violence is a pattern of assaultive behaviours, including physical, sexual and psychological, that individuals use against their family members or intimate partners. "EA refers to an intentional act or omission occurring in a relationship of trust that causes harm or serious risk of harm to an older adult or deprives an older adult of basic needs (Burnes, Rizzo, Gorroochurn, Pollack, Lachs, 2014)".

Elder Mistreatment or violence against older people is just one aspect of the broader issue of family violence and is a very real and prominent issue amongst Australian communities. One of the most important goals for Royal commission should be lessen the elder mistreatment or violence against them.

Elder abuse and elder neglect are two different terms, but both of which have not been defined properly and are often grouped under Elder Mistreatment (EM), misunderstanding arise as a result. The current definition of elder abuse is anyone aged 65+ who is mistreated / abused by a family member or caregiver. Elder abuse is new to research, but has existed in society for centuries. Elder abuse is largely perpetrated by family members in a caregiving role. Elder abuse has a lack of clarity regarding key terms and definitions and requires further research to solidify exactly what it is and what forms it takes.

Our research indicated that the incidence of elder abuse is set to increase in the future. This is because Australia's population is aging. In the five years from 2008-2013 the number of Australian's aged 65+ grew by 533,000 (up 19%) to 3.34 million people (ABS, 2015). Current life expectancy for an Australian child born in 2011 is 79.9 years and a female is 84.3 years (ABS, 2015).

Question two

The Royal Commission wants to hear about the extent to which recent reforms and developments have improved responses to family violence, and where they need to be expanded or altered.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare identifies the main categories of elder violence as physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. The abuse reviewed by the Royal Commission covers typically physical and sexual family violence, with little importance being placed on the emotional, neglect and traditionally 'sub-abusive' forms of violence against elder cohorts. The issue of Elder Mistreatment lacks media coverage and social awareness. This is believed to be due to a combination of feminist advances and media attention which has primarily focused attention on supporting women aged between 20-50 years, with the goal of providing protection and safety for them and their children. This situation obviously creates positive outcomes for these women and children and as such must be continued. However, unfortunately by

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diverting so many resources into one “at risk” demographic it has created a void whereby other marginalized populations are overlooked or underserved. One such group is the elders within our society (Band-Winterstein, Goldblatt, & Alon, 2014). As such it is an issue that often goes unheard as victims rarely speak out and when they do, the damage has already been done. One research paper estimates that the physical consequences were most frequently minor injuries (95%) with permanent consequences (scars) in only 6.8% of the cases (Frazao, Norton & Magalhaes, 2014).

Question four

If you or your organisation have been involved in programs, campaigns or initiatives about family violence for the general community, tell us what these involved and how they have been evaluated.

At La Trobe University, whilst studying Social Marketing it is a course requirement to perform an in-depth analysis of various social issues and formulate strategies to help overcome these key social problems. At La Trobe University we like to be directly involved with providing strategic solutions for particular social issues. In 2015 the issue we reviewed was Domestic Violence.

“Social marketing is the adaptation of commercial marketing technologies to programs deigned to influence the voluntary behavior of target audiences to improve their personal welfare and that of the society of which they are a part” (Andreasen, 1994).

It is a key theme of the Royal Commission into Family Violence that the commission is seeking ideas and opportunities for **VOLUNTARY BEHAVIOUR CHANGE** with ‘at risk perpetrator groups” and “at risk victim groups”. Social marketing can assist the community with the achievement of these voluntary behaviour goals.

Question five

If you or your organisation have been involved in observing or assessing programs, campaigns or initiatives of this kind, we are interested in your conclusions about their effectiveness in reducing and preventing family violence.

The issue of domestic violence against elder is rather complex. It requires insight into what is currently being done to prevent the issue as well as the main problems surrounding domestic violence. The current problem plaguing the issue of domestic violence is the lack of support that is offered to the victims at home or age care. Prevention of violence against elder is a major priority and a lack of education and support leads to the ongoing suffering of the victims.

Recent research into best practice Protective Service utilization.

Research into the field of best practice Protective Service utilization is very limited. Factors to assist our understanding in WHY this underreporting exists are both understudied and based on generalizations. As such they must be treated with caution.

Our research uncovered some noteworthy attempts at understanding best practice police intervention models from studying the New York City police department. In

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NYC the current elder abuse intervention model relies on the elderly victim accepting and pursuing a program of safety interventions recommended by Protective Service personnel. Refusal/ underutilization of services is a major problem. The NYC program is different from intimate partner violence (IPV) programs that place a larger emphasis on perpetrator intervention. Elder protective programs are voluntary unless the elder lacks cognitive capacity (Burns et, al. 2014).

Some key findings were:

- In cases involving financial abuse, higher service underutilization was associated with females, poor health, perceived danger, previous help-seeking, and self or family referral.
- In physical abuse cases, higher service utilization was associated with family referral and previous help-seeking; lower service utilization was related to Hispanic race/ethnicity, being married, and child/grandchild perpetrator.
- In emotional abuse cases, higher service utilization was associated with self or family referral, victim–perpetrator gender differential, perceived danger, and previous help-seeking; lower SU was related to child/grandchild perpetrator (Burns, et al. 2014)
- Common reasons for an elder to decline police intervention include preserving family relationships, protecting the family member (perpetrator) from police and to maintain a sense of status quo.

Although these findings relate to a small sample of only 250 cases in NYC, these finding will be helpful when attempting to understand patterns of service underutilization and reporting. The implications will be helpful to consider when formulating a best practice model for Victoria Police.

Question six

What circumstances, conditions, situations or events, within relationships, families, institutions and whole communities, are associated with the occurrence or persistence of family violence?

- Elder abuse is hard to define
- Neglect is hard to define
- Victims are VERY reluctant to complain to anyone– police, family, friends
- Victims cope better if their social skills are high.
- Most of the research is done by front line social workers / police / psychologists and is focussed on helping the victims after the abuse has occurred.

Key research into the field of elder abuse has attempted to uncover the reasons for violence against elders. One such report was the Prevalence and Correlates of Emotional, Physical, Sexual, and Financial Abuse and Potential Neglect in the United

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States: The National Elder Mistreatment Study. By Acierno, Amstadter, Steve, Muzzy & Kilpatrick, (2010).

It was a study of 5777 American respondents in 2010, found that abuse levels over a One-year period was 4.6% for emotional abuse, 1.6% for physical abuse, 0.6% for sexual abuse, 5.1% for potential neglect, and 5.2% for current financial abuse by a family member. One in 10 respondents reported emotional, physical, or sexual mistreatment or potential neglect in the past year. The most consistent correlates of mistreatment across abuse types were low social support and previous traumatic event exposure. This data showed that abuse of the elderly is prevalent. Addressing low social support with preventive interventions could have significant public health implications.

Key findings were:

- This study found that 11.4% experienced elder mistreatment in the past 12 months.
- Low social support is a risk factor in all forms of abuse / mistreatment and more than tripled the likelihood of underreporting to police.
- The centrality of social support to the health and well-being of older adults is perhaps the core finding of the study.

Risk Factors to abuse

Responses to our risk factor questions indicated:

- 45.7% (2262) of respondents had low household income,
- 80.9% (5174) were unemployed or retired,
- 22.3% (1279) had poor health,
- 62.0% (3566) had experienced a previous traumatic event,
- 43.6% (1379) perceived their social support as low,
- 40.8% (2329) used some form of social services,
- 37.8% (2176) needed some assistance with activities of daily living.
- 49.9% (2833) of respondents were 'young-old', and
- 50.1% (2842) were old-old.

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Question seven

What circumstances and conditions are associated with the reduced occurrence of family violence?

Family members (children, men, women etc.) are reluctant to see the importance of family harmony as an important factor in preventing violence against elders. Furthermore, the victims immediate family – spouse, child, daughter/son-in-law or grandchild are the most common perpetrator of the abuse.

Relationship between the victim and abuser.		
Relationship	Total (n = 70) (n %)	Married Victims (n=37) (N %)
Partner	20 (28.6 %)	18 (48.6 %)
Children	33 (47.1 %)	12 (32.4 %)
Children-in-law	10 (14.3 %)	3 (8.1 %)
Grandchildren	5 (7.1 %)	3 (8.1 %)
Other	2 (2.9 %)	1 (2.7 %)

Source: Domestic violence against elderly with disability
Frazao, Norton, & Magalhaes (2014)

We have realized that understanding theories also has a benefit in this particular case. Because theory helps us understand behavioral issues and help us to formulate strategies. In changing the behaviours associated with violence against elders, the social norms theory and exchange theory will be utilized. Social norms theory builds on the belief that individual behaviour is influenced by the behaviour of others. It is the idea of conforming so as to be accepted by the members of one's group. We think injunctive norms (behaviour) communicate the general accepted values of society. Therefore to change the behaviour of perpetrators of elder violence we must communicate that this is definitively not the norm or socially acceptable, through retelling victims stories and using graphic advertisements to convey public distain. Exchange theory suggests that when provided behavioural alternatives, the individual will impute values to them and select the one offering the greatest personal enhancement or benefit.

Question eight (A)

Tell us about any gaps or deficiencies in current responses to family violence, including legal responses.

- Public funding and support is limited
- Inadequate awareness as it is not spoken about frequently
- The issue of violence against elders at large lacks awareness
- Elders are scared to speak out when they are abused
- Children (perpetrators) are reluctant to accept that they have been abusive or violent towards their elder parents.
- Stigma carried from lack of support to previous victims

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Research suggests that refusal or underutilization of protective Elder Abuse interventions is a major problem globally. In New York City (NYC) approximately, 93% to 96% of Elder Abuse victims living in the community do not use formal support services. Among Elder Abuse victims who interface with protective service programs, 13% to 58% refuse services completely. Among clients who accept protective services support, only 16% to 28% pursue all of the interventions recommended in their safety plans (Burnes, et al. 2014).

Factors suggesting reasons for service underutilization include:

- Fragility of old age
- Vulnerability of old age
- Preserving family relationships
- Protecting the family member (perpetrator) from police
- Maintain a sense of status quo.

Question eight (B)

Tell us about what improvements you would make to overcome these gaps and deficiencies, or otherwise improve current responses.

We would suggest incorporating Social marketing strategies to overcome the gaps. Unlike commercial marketing, it is used to develop activities aimed at eliminating, reducing, modifying, accepting, rejecting, maintaining or bring about any change in people's behaviour for the benefit of individuals and society as a whole. Hopefully awareness against elder mistreatment will be raised within society. To monitor and evaluate the campaign, continuous research and regular monitoring is imperative to contribute to the success of the campaign.

Question nine

Does insufficient integration and co-ordination between the various bodies who come into contact with people affected by family violence hinder the assessment of risk, or the effectiveness of (early intervention, crisis and ongoing) support provided, to people affected by family violence? If so, please provide examples.

Yes, lack of integration and co-ordination between various stakeholders affect the issue. An evaluation of the key stakeholders is necessary to determine how they can affect, or are affected:

Stakeholder	Needs	Benefits from the campaign	Potential Role
Victims – Elders	- To be safe from the harm	- By deterring others from committing domestic violence against elders they remain safe. - Improved health (physical and psychological) and safety	- Story-telling and speaking out against perpetrators to create awareness

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Adults – Perpetrator & Protectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To resist committing violent acts against elders - Be good children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid harming the elder - Set a good example for other adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reform from committing acts of domestic violence
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uphold public safety by applying the law - Protect victims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help reduce DV - Protect elders from harm - Increased resources and powers to deal with these types of instances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Run “Anti-Abuse” seminars - Motivate elders on how to seek police assistance
Protection & Intervention Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding from public to increase staffing - Greater public support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased funding - Fulfill their role more effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold educational classes on how to prevent and intervene in instances of abuse
Government/ Legislators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Act responsibly and represent the public interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gain support and public backing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding and endorsing the campaign - Introducing new policy/legislative framework to support the campaign
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Duty to society to report on issue that are important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased ratings and viewers - Appear socially responsible/concerned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mini series on Domestic Violence against elder - to communicate the issue to the public at large and generate awareness

Question ten

What practical changes might improve integration and co-ordination? What barriers to integration and co-ordination exist?

As well as aiming to raise awareness and bring integration as a whole, attention to direct this purpose towards policy makers; those members of society who are responsible in formulating policies. Policy makers help to increase efficiency and tackled hidden needs of integration and co-ordination. The need for inter-organizational collaboration within public sector originates is imperative here.

Research suggests that one practical change to make a key difference in the lives of Elder abuse victims would be the creation of elder specific support groups.

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VOLUNTARY SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

Support groups for victims of EM presents several challenges. The reluctance of elders to speak out against the person abusing them is a major barrier to getting help (Wolf, 2001). Health Professionals are often reluctant to report cases of EM for fear of making a mis-diagnosis (Frazao, et. Al, 2014). In Portugal it is estimated that only 2% of EM cases are reported by Medical Professionals (Frazao, et, al, 2014). As such the incidence of abuse is considered an under reported problem. The flow on effect of this is a lack of funding for new programs. Mainstream domestic violence programs are dominated by women with children fleeing abusing partners are do not cater for the unique difficulties that end-of-life issues brings. A survey of domestic violence services in British Columbia and Yukon found that women aged 60+ represented less than 2% of the clients for that service and those aged 50-59 years of age were substantially underrepresented (Wolf, 2001).

Regarding the elderly support groups that are currently operating, the programmes that offer a group leader who is “older” or very familiar with aging issues work best. Elder support groups which focus exclusively on the unique needs that end-of-life challenges bring has been found to be the most beneficial for this group. Elders feel free to discuss their true feelings, which results in increased self-esteem and peer support is warmly welcomed (Wolf et al.,2014).

Question eleven

What are some of the most promising and successful ways of supporting the ongoing safety and wellbeing of people affected by violence? Are there gaps or deficiencies in our approach to supporting ongoing safety and wellbeing? How could measures to reduce the impact of family violence be improved?

Formulating a meaningful social marketing concept is necessary here to support the ongoing safety and wellbeing of elder people affected in Victoria. In order to effectively promote the new violence free voluntary behaviour (social marketing product) certain promotional activities may be utilised. One method of promotion is using advertisements and placing these in areas that will be highly voluminous of the target audience. For example, placing anti elder violence advertisements near local community centers, public transport will be useful. Additionally using television advertisements again will target both children of elders and adults at large in the relevant setting and can be used to graphically demonstrate the product. These promotional efforts should utilise the appeals (social responsibility and guilt) to ensure that everyone connect with the message and actively accept the behaviour, as well as elders understanding that violence is wrong and something can be done to prevent it.

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Question twelve (A)

If you, your partner or a relative have participated in a behaviour change program, tell us about the program and whether you found it effective. What aspects of the program worked best?

1 Stages of Change Theory:

Stages of change theory suggest that behaviour change is a gradual five (5) stage process. The concept was defined by Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) (Hastings and Domegan, (2014). The possible influence on elders seeking assistance is:

Stage	Behaviour
Precontemplation:	Elder is aware that they are being abused /mistreated
Contemplation:	Elder is considering should they tell someone about their possible abuse. Who should they tell? What would they do? Would the police get involved? Would they have to leave the home that they love? Would their family member stop visiting them in the twilight years of their life?
Preparation:	They have decided to act. They are possibly going to tell their priest, a different family member or a social worker.
Action:	They speak out and tell someone about the possible abuse.
Confirmation (maintenance):	The Elder is committed to leading a better quality of life and won't put up with this abuse/ mistreatment any more.

Question twelve (B)

Do you have criticisms of the program and ideas about how it should be improved?

Improve the communication between Protective Services and Police so they can better facilitate prevention and intervention of elder violence, including rehabilitating and punishing perpetrators. This can be measured by comparing the pre and post campaign figures of how many arrests are made pursuant to instances of elder violence.

Improve Government and Community support and awareness, which can be measured through the level of funding, provided for this campaign and associated services.

Research. Almost all of the research done in the field of elder mistreatment involves researchers studying THEM. Researcher need to involve the elders more in the research to achieve a better outcome. The other obvious failings of most programs is the lack of research tailored to the perpetrator and obtaining their input on the best ways of achieving voluntary behavior change.

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Question thirteen

If you, your partner or a relative have been violent and changed their behaviour, tell us about what motivated that change. Was a particular relationship, program, process or experience (or combination of these) a key part of the change? What did you learn about what caused the violent behaviour?

A variety of factors can influence negative behaviour toward elder, including:

- family structure and family education
- relationships with others
- cultural shift and change
- societal or socioeconomic factors
- individual characteristics
- health conditions
- psychiatric issues
- life experiences

Using social marketing theory, we can establish an effective marketing strategy to challenge the attitudes and behaviours of those who seek to prevent efforts of others in eradicating violence against elders. The key aspect we would suggest is to change the social norms by providing key messages of appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

Social Norms Theory (SNT):

Social Norms Theory (SNT) suggests that our behavior is a mix of what other people do and say (descriptive norms) and what are socially approved behaviours (injunctive norms) (Hastings and Domegan, 2014).

Elders will need to be surveyed (qualitative analysis) to establish if their reluctance to report elder mistreatment is a result of what people have said to them or if it is because of them believing that it is socially approved behavior NOT to complain. Is it about conforming to and wanting to be accepted by their family members? Rewards for silence include being able to stay in the family home, having the loved family members visit them and family harmony.

Punishments for the elder victim should they come forward and complain include; family exclusion, jail for the loved one and emotional stress.

As the 'head of the family' many elderly people have a belief that they should "lead by example" in regards to family harmony and therefore say nothing.

SNT would be used to guide semi in-depth interviews focusing on a cross-sectional analysis to identify what exactly the normal beliefs are on this matter in society. How many elders are abused, what form the abuse takes, who does the abuse and what channels of help they are most likely to use and what outcome (if any) eventuated?

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Question fourteen

To what extent do current processes encourage and support people to be accountable and change their behaviour? To what extent do they fail to do so? How do we ensure that behaviour change is lasting and sustainable?

Current processes are largely tailored around protective services (police) helping to protect the victim from the perpetrator. The challenge for elders can be found in the complexities that end of life issues bring. Elders are very reluctant to involve the police in disputes for fear of the perpetrator 'rejecting' them in their twilight years. Many victims who live with the perpetrator are reluctant to leave the family home and the community groups that they rely on (eg church and neighbours).

Question fifteen

If you or your organisation have offered a behaviour change program, tell us about the program, including any evaluation of its effectiveness which has been conducted.

The prevention of violence against elders is vitally important. Social marketing campaigns and school-based programs are a necessary component in promoting positive behaviour. In the aim to stop this type of violence, both the Federal and Victorian governments need to work together to target schools. It is vital to implement programs to educate children on the harmful effects of this violence, in both primary and secondary schools around Australia. Applying this strategy in schools means that education will be aiming to combat family violence's particularly negative attitude toward elders and to furthermore curb behaviour before it sets in later in an individual's lifetime. The Victorian government needs to work with the education sector in order to make the education of family violence compulsory in education classes at schools. Particularly, the education sector needs to pay specific attention to young boys to portray the message that under no circumstances people are allowed to exert verbal, physical or sexual violence over elders or others within the community.

Question sixteen

If you or your organisation have been involved in observing or assessing approaches to behaviour change, tell us about any Australian or international research which may assist the Royal Commission. In particular, what does research indicate about the relative effectiveness of early intervention in producing positive outcomes?

The findings on violence against elders are based on epidemiologic studies and public opinion in relation to the subject. In reviewing violence against elders we need to take a closer look at the causal dimensions of physical elder abuse in various situations. Research need to be conducted to understand both the causal dimensions and also phenomenological viewpoints. Both survey and ethnographic observation are necessary here to find adequate information.

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La Trobe University has the resources to assist in this process, but a formal research plan, terms of reference and research funding would need to be agreed upon prior to commencement.

Question seventeen

Are there specific cultural, social, economic, geographical or other factors in particular groups and communities in Victoria which tend to make family violence more likely to occur, or to exacerbate its effects? If so, what are they?

The market segmentation will focus on elder males as well as females within a family environment. It will have no specific identification of segmentation, as it is a pressing issue in which every member of the society needs to be aware of. Having that said, there will be a central focus on the young people who are the perpetrators as the behaviour change that is aimed to occur is their violent behaviour toward elders. This will lead to targeting close family members and friends aware of the situation but do not speak up, so that they do speak up. It will also focus on authority figures such as the police department, health services, assault services and such like to treat both elder female and male victims of domestic violence. Because the issue targets such a widespread audience, it is aimed to make everybody in society aware at an educated level.

Or research has been restricted due to the small number of studies performed on elder abuse victims studying barriers to seeking assistance. Existing research has however identified several factors linking elders to abuse. These include: gender, age, ethnicity, and marital status. Living arrangements and social support, reported health status, previous connection to the social service system, elder perceived need, and organizational (doctors, nursing home, support workers) formulation of need (Burnes et. Al, 2014).

Our research has indicated that the incidence of elder abuse has a strong likelihood of increasing in the future. This is due to the combined effects of an aging population and a diminished supply of people readily, willing and available to care for them. Traditionally the role/responsibility of caring for elders has been given to unemployed women aged between 45 and 60 years of age (Phillips, Bernard, Chittenden. 2002). Currently there is a trend in Australian society for many of these women to still have children (dependents) living at home and many are divorced (sole breadwinner) which forces them into full time-work. Our research identified one study in the United Kingdom where the majority of working carers were only able to do so because they provided less than 10 hours care per week (Phillips, Bernard and Chittenden, 2002).

Question eighteen

What barriers prevent people in particular groups and communities in Victoria from engaging with or benefiting from family violence services? How can the family violence system be improved to reflect the diversity of people's experiences?

The reluctance of elders to speak out against the person abusing them is a major barrier to getting help (Wolf, 2001). The most common perpetrators are either their partners (if married) or their children (Frazao et. Al, 2014). The emotional connection

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to the perpetrator and a natural desire to protect their loved ones is complicated by the frailty of old age and end-of-life decisions.

Health Professionals are often reluctant to report cases of EM for fear of making a misdiagnosis (Frazao, et. Al, 2014).

Question nineteen

How can responses to family violence in these groups and communities be improved? What approaches have been shown to be most effective?

Anti Elder Violence will be implemented through the following methods:

- Victim storytelling – Having past victims of elder violence retell their stories to Australians to give them perspective and understanding as to the impact their actions can have on elders.
- Government Advertising – Using graphic recreations of family violence against elders to create a damning social image for the exhibition of such behaviour.
- Social Media Awareness – Using social media is a powerful tool to convey a message and product, therefore using Facebook and Twitter can be used to gain public support for the change. Additionally these mediums can be used to spread information regarding the health issues resultant from violence.

Question twenty

Are there any other suggestions you would like to make to improve policies, programs and services which currently seek to carry out the goals set out above?

To successfully implement policies, the communication and cooperation of all members of society is essential. It is recommended that government develop a campaign and the campaign run for a period of 6 months to trial its success, and then reevaluate the effectiveness of the selected methods of marketing the product. The methods will be designed to promote a behavioral change that show that domestic violence against elders is not acceptable. Each method is intended to appeal to the relevant emotions of the target audience specified to generate support.

An evaluation of this campaign should be undertaken by comparing the current statistics of family violence against elders. The length of the trial is intended to be long enough to show whether there has been an impact on the issue at hand. In addition, attendance at education seminars can be monitored as well as the reach (likes, comments, shares, views) of social media posts. Following the evaluation of the campaign, changes should be made accordingly to the data collected and then a secondary trial period run to determine the success of the alterations.

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Question twenty-one

The Royal Commission will be considering both short term and longer term responses to family violence. Tell us about the changes which you think could produce the greatest impact in the short and longer term.

- Messages to be framed in a ‘negative’ rather than ‘positive’ light. Family violence prevention campaigns emphasizing the dangers of family violence against elders, not the benefits of non-domestic violence.
- Authoritarian rather than empathetic. Material in the advertisement needs to tell people what to do and how to run their lives, rather than enabling and encouraging them to make their own decisions to restrict family violence against elders.
- Long term rather than short term. Anti-family violence material emphasized the health and mental risks of violence against elders, many of which has long term and probabilistic.

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Conclusion

Family violence is quite difficult to define clearly. This is a contributing factor as to why violence against the elderly is an underreported phenomenon globally. Violence against elders in Australian and Victorian society is set to increase due to the combined factors of increasing population and added pressures on the traditional caregivers, women aged 45-60. Elders are generally very reluctant to commence police intervention against the perpetrator. This is because the perpetrator is most likely their spouse (if married) or one of their children or grandchildren. Due to the complexities that end-of-life issues bring, specialist domestic violence teams should be established within Victoria Police to help the emergency services workers and victims establish if they have been abused and then help the victims engage in a suitable support plan.

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