

Older Persons  
**Elder Abuse Prevention Unit**

Preliminary Data Report For  
*Lifeline Community Care Queensland's*  
*World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) 2010*  
*Elder Abuse Awareness Campaign*



**Elder Abuse**  
**Is it happening to someone you know?**  
**Elder abuse can be:**

- Emotional
- Financial
- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect

**1300 651 192**  
For Information, Support and Referrals

[www.eapu.com.au](http://www.eapu.com.au)

Funded by  
   

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**OUR SHARED VALUES** Compassion | Respect | Justice | Working Together | Leading through Learning

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

### Background

This report provides cursory description and analysis of data arising from an elder abuse awareness campaign conducted by Lifeline Community Care Queensland's Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU) and the Queensland Department of Communities for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) 2010. The statistics and charts contained in this report have been checked for accuracy and can be used with confidence.

It is the intention of Lifeline's EAPU to provide a full research paper based on the WEAAD 2010 campaign to explore the best methods of undertaking an awareness campaign for elder abuse. This future paper will provide greater detail including a gender analysis. This WEAAD 2010 campaign was based on research undertaken by the EAPU in 2009 to design and make predictions about the best method of raising awareness about elder abuse. With the assistance of Lifeline's Communications and Fundraising section the "Is it Happening to Someone you Know" awareness campaign was subsequently developed.

The Queensland Department of Communities also launched the "Act as One against Elder Abuse" campaign during WEAAD 2010 which also promoted Lifeline's Elder Abuse Helpline number. The Department's campaign is acknowledged as having a significant impact on the figures in this report. The synergies of the two campaigns make it difficult for differentiating whether calls were as a result of the Department's or EAPU's campaign. However a separate section is provided for the Department's information where this data could be separated.

### Is It Happening to Someone You Know? Targets and Predictions

The target audience for the EAPU *Is it Happening to Someone you Know* campaign was "Family and Friends" of the abused person while the Department directed their campaign at the whole community. In each case the "call to action" was to phone Lifeline's Elder Abuse Helpline. Since neither campaign specifically targeted seniors, and since both promoted the Helpline phone number, the predictions made by the EAPU prior to the campaign are not seen to be unduly compromised.

These predictions were:

- There will be a significant rise in calls to the Helpline.
- There will be an increase in notifications by Family and Friends of the abused person.
- There will be noticeable difference in where family and friends sourced the Helpline phone number

The following statistics verify the above predictions and have implications for other services conducting elder abuse awareness campaigns.

#### Lifeline's EAPU Promotional Material for WEAAD 2010

##### Poster

26,000 older Queenslanders are abused each year by someone they know and trust...

Abuse and mistreatment can be emotional, financial, physical, sexual, or neglect.

Is it happening to someone you know?

Elder Abuse Prevention Unit  
Promoting the right of older people to live free from abuse

First port of call for confidential information, support and referrals  
**1300 651 192**

- Cost of a local call from anywhere in Queensland
- During business hours (after hours message bank)
- Callers may remain anonymous
- Mobile or Interstate callers please: 07 3250 1836\*

\*Domestic charges apply to interstate calls to call your bank

www.eapu.com.au

##### Billboard at Central Railway Station Brisbane

**Elder Abuse**

**Is it happening to someone you know?**

Elder abuse can be:

- Emotional
- Financial
- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect

**1300 651 192**

www.eapu.com.au For Information, Support and Referrals

##### Newspaper Ads

**ELDER ABUSE**

How an older person is abused, mistreated or exploited by someone they know and trust.

Is it happening to someone you know?

Call the Elder Abuse Helpline  
**1300 651 192**

Non-Spanish: 1300 651 192

The first port of call for information, help and support.

A Queensland Wide Service for the cost of a local call.

Callers may remain anonymous.

A Lifeline Community Care Queensland program funded by the Department of Communities.

Some older people are abused, mistreated or exploited by someone they know and trust.

Is it happening to someone you know?

Call the Elder Abuse Helpline  
**1300 651 192**

##### Bookmark (for library displays)

**1300 651 192**

9.8 Monday - Friday - The first port of call for support, information and referrals.

A Queensland-wide service for the cost of a local call.

For interstate and mobile callers (07) 3250 1836.

Callers may remain anonymous.

A Lifeline Brisbane program funded by the Department of Communities.

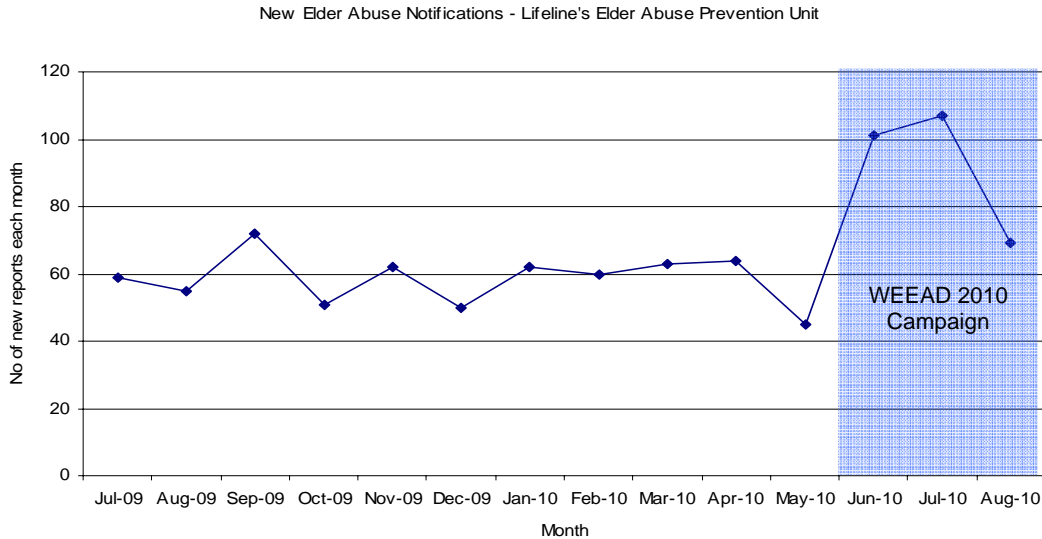
A full list of EAPU promotional material including TV Adverts can be viewed at

[www.eapu.com.au](http://www.eapu.com.au)

## EFFECT ON CALL RATE

The first chart clearly shows that the WEAAD 2010 awareness campaign increased the number of calls to Lifeline’s EAPU Helpline. The previous average number of new elder abuse notifications each month<sup>1</sup> increased from 56.1 to an average of 92.3 notifications as recorded during the three month campaign period (1<sup>st</sup> June – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010). This represents an increase in new elder abuse notifications of 64%.

**Chart 1.**



The EAPU is confident that the general level of awareness about elder abuse has increased within the community and this effect may be detected through increased call rates extending past the three month campaign period. In particular the campaign run by the Queensland Department of Communities and targeted at the general community would be seen to contribute to this effect.

**Posters from the Department of Communities “Act as 1” Campaign**



<sup>1</sup> Note that a “Baseline” measurement has been used so that comparisons could be made to detect any effects of the WEAAD 2010 campaign. It was considered that the campaign period would commence 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010 and finish on 31<sup>st</sup> August. The extended period is due to EAPU promotions that extended until “Senior’s Week” in August 2010. The Baseline measurement is a 38 month period of Helpline data collected from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2006 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009 to ensure the months of interest during the WEAAD campaign were covered in the baseline.

## EFFECT ON NOTIFIERS AND THEIR HELPLINE SOURCE

### Notifier Effect

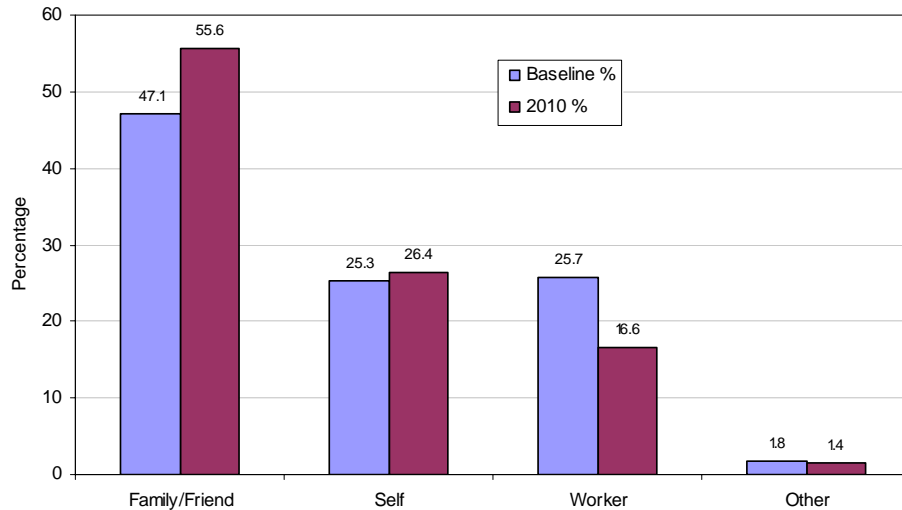
The following table provides a general comparison of Helpline notifiers for the baseline and WEAAD 2010 periods. Note that the notifier categories identified in bold & italics were grouped to form the target category of “Family & Friends” used in this research.

Relationship of Notifier	Number (Baseline)	% (Baseline)	Number (2010)	% (2010)
<b><i>Daughter</i></b>	393	17.9	64	23.1
<b><i>Friend</i></b>	177	8.0	29	10.5
<b><i>Grandchild</i></b>	35	1.6	6	2.2
<b><i>Informal Carer (Commences 2010)</i></b>	0	0.0	2	0.7
<b><i>Intimate personal (Commences 2010)</i></b>	0	0.0	1	0.4
<b><i>Neighbour</i></b>	108	4.9	8	2.9
Other	40	1.8	4	1.4
<b><i>Other relative</i></b>	180	8.2	18	6.5
<b><i>Partner/spouse</i></b>	17	0.8	4	1.4
Self	557	25.3	73	26.4
<b><i>Son</i></b>	126	5.7	22	7.9
Worker	566	25.7	46	16.6
<b>Grand Totals</b>	2199	100	277	100

The effect of the WEAAD 2010 campaign upon the target audience of Family and Friends can be shown more clearly in Chart 2, with an 8% increase in the proportion of notifications from this category. The other item of interest is that notifications from agency workers (“Worker” category) were around 10% less for this period.

Chart 2

Notifier Comparison; Baseline with 2010

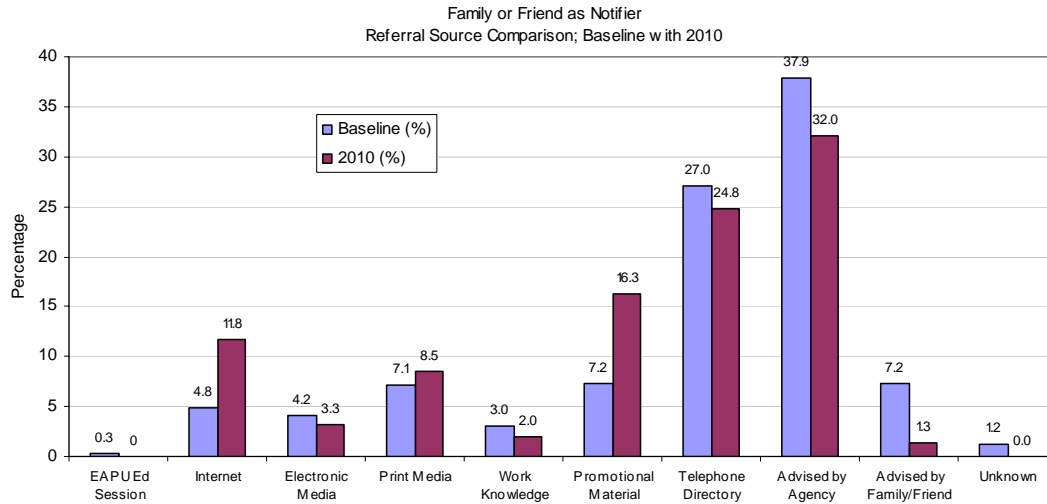


## Referral Source

As many mediums as possible were used to promote the campaign to reinforce the message and to achieve maximum coverage throughout Queensland. The details of the EAPU and Department's campaign and the TV and newspaper advertisements, posters, bookmarks etc can be found on the EAPU website – [www.eapu.com.au](http://www.eapu.com.au)

**Family and Friends Referral Source:** The effect of the promotional initiatives can be seen on Chart 3 which shows that although agency referrals and the phone book were used by most Family and Friends, sourcing the Helpline number from the internet and promotional materials more than doubled during the campaign period.

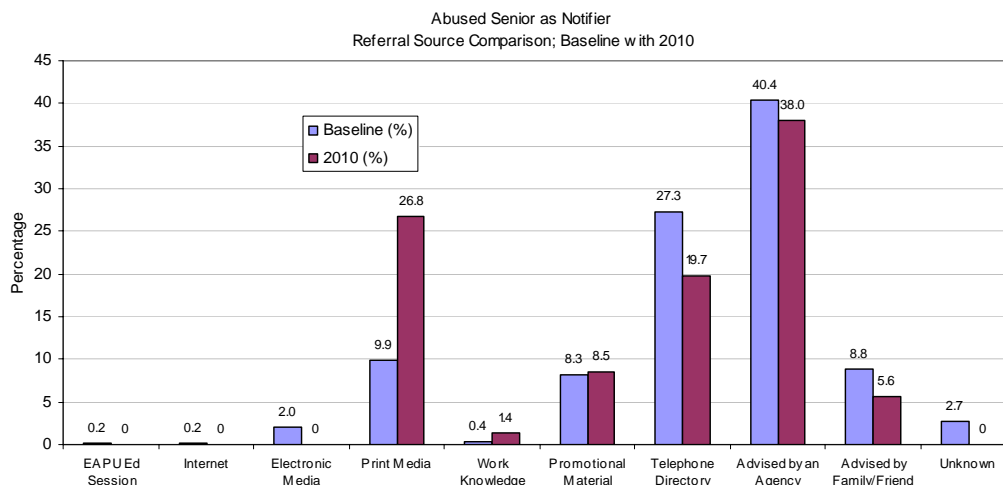
Chart 3



The Department's strategic placement of posters and signs at public places including bus stops, shopping centres and public toilets are considered the main reason for the effect seen in the "Promotional Material" category. The use of "e" based promotions through the EAPU, Lifeline, Department and other participating websites as well as sending "Tweets" etc may not fully explain the rise in the internet as a source. It is likely, as suggested in EAPU's prior research that another medium, such as a radio interview, may have triggered the notifier to track down the Helpline number via the internet.

**Abused Seniors Referral Source:** It is also worthwhile to consider the effect of the campaign on the older person. It was considered that the campaign would raise awareness about elder abuse just as effectively for seniors even though they were not the primary audience. The 17% jump in "Print Media" as the source where seniors found the Helpline number is the dominant feature of Chart 4. Although the proportion of self reporting seniors remained the same, at a quarter of all notifiers (refer Chart 2), this rise in accessing the number from newspapers, newsletters etc may indicate that this is a more convenient way of providing the Helpline number than from the other usual sources such as the telephone directory which dropped by 7.6%.

Chart 4

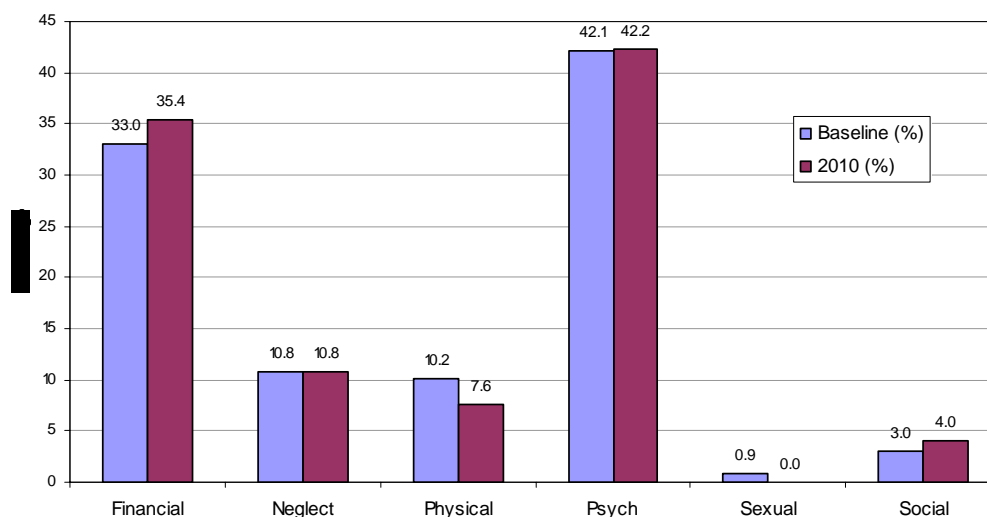


## EFFECT ON TYPES OF ABUSE BEING REPORTED

The WEAAD 2010 campaign did not focus on any particular form of elder abuse although both the EAPU and Department campaigns used more subtle examples to raise awareness about the less obvious abuse types (refer to the EAPU website [www.eapu.com.au](http://www.eapu.com.au) for the promotional material used). As such the types of elder abuse recorded during the campaign did not differ greatly from baseline measurements as shown in the following chart.

Chart 5

Abuse Type Comparison: Baseline with 2010



## IMPLICATIONS

Elder abuse is a relatively new social problem and therefore there is little research to inform practice for agencies responding to this issue. Studies that focus on the Australian experience are rare and even rarer are studies that focus on prevention strategies. Raising the level of awareness of elder abuse among seniors and the community is recognised as a primary prevention strategy however the amount of research in this area is particularly sparse.

There were many limitations to this study including the inability to secure funding for promotion of the Radio/Television advertisements and so they were distributed as Community Service Announcements thereby limiting their effect. More detailed analysis of the whole campaign, particularly on the target audience, will be forthcoming in a larger paper to be produced. However, indications are that significant results have been achieved through strategic and often inexpensive awareness initiatives. This would certainly have cost saving implications for services with limited resources to undertake awareness raising initiatives.



Elder Abuse Prevention Unit