

Theme – A rally cry for equality

Presentation title

Understanding coercive control as elder abuse.

Presentation type

Single speaker - spoken presentation with data and case studies.

Abstract

Nationally and internationally, coercive control is increasingly being recognised as abuse. However, this is not commonly the case in relation to older people, particularly when it relates to conduct by their adult children and other family members.

The NSW Ageing and Disability Commission (ADC) was established in July 2019 to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect and exploitation of older people and adults with disability in their family, home and community. From the start of the ADC, most of the reports have related to older people, mainly older women. Coercive control has been endemic in these reports, including multiple and concurrent forms of psychological abuse, financial abuse, physical abuse and neglect.

In handling reports about abuse, neglect and exploitation of older people, the ADC has identified a range of issues that have affected recognition of coercive control by frontline workers, police and justice agencies, families, and older people themselves.

This session will explore coercive control of older people, its impact, and the approaches taken by the ADC to respond to these matters to seek to drive change on individual, service and systemic levels.

The session will include:

- An overview of the role of the NSW Ageing and Disability Commission and how we uphold the rights of older people to live free from abuse in their family, home and community.
- How coercive control presents for older people within family relationships.
- The safeguarding and other measures the ADC has taken in response to coercive control.
- How frontline workers can better prevent, detect and respond to coercive control of older people.