

**Elder Abuse:  
it's time for action!**

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Conference Friday 15 June 2007



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aged rights advocacy service inc.

for the rights of older people

# MANAGING TEMPTATION

Responding to the risk of abuse

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day  
Conference

15 June 2007

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# Managing Temptation

## *The Context*

Challenging behaviour

## *The Risk*

An abusive response

# Managing Temptation

## Challenging Behaviour

Irrespective of the behaviour, the provider's actions (and hence the actions of the provider's staff) must accommodate:

- Duty of care to care recipients
- Occupational health and safety obligations
- Compliance with legislation

# Managing Temptation

The growing risk:

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Report  
*Dementia in Australia: national data analysis and growth*  
2003:

- 175,000 dementia sufferers
- 24.7m residential care bed days (of a total of 57.1m)

2031:

- 465,000 dementia sufferers
- (by extrapolation) 65.6m residential care bed days!!

# Managing Temptation

## Potential responses to challenging behaviour:

- Like (eg. aggressive) for like (eg. aggressive) behaviour
- Immediate but inappropriate responses (eg. medication or restraint)
- Withdrawal of emotional support
- Immediate termination of care

# Managing Temptation

Addressing the risk of abuse - the role of the Board

Good governance practices ensure policies are in place to manage and address risk

The risks of inadequacy in responses to challenging behaviour are extensive – and, in addition to the claims of the abused person, include the provider failing accreditation or suffering the application of sanctions

# Managing Temptation

## Step 1

Acceptance by the governing body of the provider that challenging behaviour represents a significant and growing risk to the business

Which may be preceded by:

Senior management providing information to the governing body to that effect

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## Step 2

The development of policies outlining:

- acceptable responses to challenging behaviour; and
- the resources available to respond; and
- how to access those resources

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## Step 3

Training staff in those policies so that in situations of stress:

- (a) there are pathways for staff to follow and resources for them to access
- (b) those pathways are appropriate and fair
- (c) if followed, staff can be assured of provider support

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## Step 4

Maintain staff familiarity with policies by ensuring adequate (including refresher) training in those policies

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## Step 5

Review policies for legislative compliance and accuracy/relevancy

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