

ELDER ABUSE — ADVOCARE BOOKLET

212. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Seniors and Volunteering:

We have all read about the many scams that go on that try to elicit money from the community. Unfortunately, some of these requests come directly from family members. Can the minister outline how this government is helping seniors recognise and combat this and other forms of elder abuse?

Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for the question. Yesterday morning, I had the opportunity to attend an Advocare launch of a booklet on elder abuse. It was a great booklet to launch because it takes people through a six-step program of how they can receive help and it can be handed out by carers if elder abuse is suspected. Interestingly, we estimate about 12 000 seniors in our community are in some way abused. I think we all agree that this has to stop. It is interesting that most of the abuse comes from within their own family—children, which is most common; partners; and family carers. The most common is financial abuse, which is an issue that has to be addressed, whereby people ask their grandparents or parents to sign over their house for mortgages to help the kids out. More important is the emotional and social isolation that has a big effect on seniors in our community. Yesterday, I was able to not only launch a new protocol booklet by Advocare, but also announce \$80 000 for Advocare to set up—a first for WA—a hotline for seniors who are being abused. They can ring the number and Advocare, which will administer the hotline, will be able to direct these seniors to financial support, emotional support or wherever they need to go. I am very proud to be part of a government that recognises the seniors in our community and makes sure we do everything we can to make them feel safe in their community. I thank the member for Swan Hills for asking the question and being a big supporter of this program. It is a great commitment from our government to help seniors not only live independently, but also feel safe and secure in their retirement.