

**WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY**

*Statement by Minister for Seniors and Ageing*

**MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Seniors and Ageing)** [12.12 pm]: I am pleased to inform the house that today is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is a globally recognised event that is commemorated on 15 June each year to highlight the devastating effects of elder abuse on individuals and in societies across the world. Elder abuse is a complex human rights issue that has profound effects for many older Western Australians, their families and the broader community. It can manifest in many forms including financial, social, physical, sexual, psychological and emotional abuse. Through the Department of Communities, the state government has been engaging with key stakeholders to plan and develop a collaborative approach to this year's World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. A range of community-based events are being held to raise awareness of elder abuse, engage with members of the public and articulate the supports that are available. Some of this year's key activities include the Council on the Ageing Western Australia facilitating a virtual sector forum yesterday, which I was very pleased to attend, and launching its guide "Understanding the mistreatment of older people". Iconic Western Australian landmarks have been lit up in purple lights—the symbolic colour of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day—including Optus Stadium, Bankwest's Wentworth Building, Matagarup Bridge, Council House, Trafalgar Bridge, Fraser Avenue in Kings Park, Yagan Square, Elizabeth Quay and the Bell Tower. Legal Aid WA has launched the Elder Rights WA service, which I was proud to be part of this morning, and Advocare has facilitated a series of ready-to-listen webinars for community and service provider audiences over coming days.

I am proud that the McGowan government has helped to protect vulnerable seniors by investing in a series of initiatives including establishing the Elder Rights WA legal service, funding the WA elder abuse helpline and information service, supporting the older people's rights service delivered by Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre and designating the Council on the Ageing WA as the state's first ever peak body for vulnerable older Western Australians. Addressing elder abuse is everyone's business and on this iconic day, I encourage everyone to turn their mind to this issue, pause and think deeply on the role we all must play to make a united stand against all forms of abuse that affect and are experienced by older people.