



1. The AMA considers that the issue of elder abuse raises matters of fundamental concern to the human rights of older Australians.
2. Within this broader framework, applicable across all settings in which the elderly are vulnerable to abuse, the AMA outlines three key elements it believes are essential to achieve any systems change, designed to reduce the incidence of physical and sexual abuse in residential aged care.
3. **Compulsory reporting needs to be clearly defined. The AMA considers that the mandatory reporting of physical and sexual abuse in residential aged care facilities by employees, health care professionals and volunteers in the residential aged care setting should be the starting point for reporting.**
4. Older people living in residential aged care represent a vulnerable group in the aged care sector. When people interact with paid health care professionals, there is a high level of expectation that care will be of a high quality, and that there will be zero tolerance for physical and sexual abuse. Anyone has the right to report, but in residential aged care, there should be an absolute obligation and compulsion to report. This position will restore a level of community confidence and security back into the aged care sector.
5. **Appropriate funding and resources to provide education and training in residential aged care facilities will improve care provided to older people, and alter the culture within aged care so that elder abuse is less likely to occur in residential aged care facilities.**
6. The AMA calls for additional resources to be given to the residential aged care sector to allow for an adequate number of skilled staff to be employed, adequately remunerated, and recognised for the skill base they have developed as accredited aged care professionals.
7. The AMA advocates the development of a practical education and training program to enhance the awareness and prevention of elder abuse, and the mechanisms to deal with alleged elder abuse, within the aged care sector. This should occur concurrently with programs designed to raise public awareness of elder abuse, and should aim to reduce the incidence of 'ageism' in both the aged care sector and the broader community.
8. The AMA calls for funding to be made available to research the causes of elder abuse and the barriers and enablers to prevent its occurrence.
9. **An appropriate complaints mechanism will support the ability to mandatory report.**
10. There should be a complaints mechanism independent of the residential aged care provider group and independent of the licensing component of the Department. Development of a robust and accessible complaints system with a no blame culture focused on systems change, as a first step toward reducing the incidence of elder abuse.
11. The AMA supports the introduction of greater investigative powers for the Complaints Commissioner, police checks for all residential aged care workers and volunteers, anonymity for whistleblowers, and regional geriatric services and ACAT teams as an integral part of the complaints resolution process.