

Queensland Government response to the *Inquiry into elder abuse in Queensland*

Education, Arts and Communities Committee
Report No. 11
58th Parliament, November 2025

The Inquiry into elder abuse in Queensland (the Inquiry), led by the Education, Arts and Communities Committee (the Committee), delivered a key Government Election Commitment under the Queensland Government's First 100 Day Plan.

The Committee tabled the Inquiry's report on 12 December 2025, making 16 recommendations aligned with the key themes raised throughout the Inquiry: advocating for consistent and collective national reform; strengthening support and services for victims; age-friendly and inclusive communities; addressing the misuse of enduring power of attorney legislation; and adult safeguarding for adults with care and support needs.

The Queensland Government response to the Committee's recommendations is provided below.

Recommendation	Position	Government Response
Recommendation 1 The Committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly note this report.	Support	The Queensland Government notes this recommendation and acknowledges the work of the Committee in preparing the report. The Queensland Government welcomes the opportunity to consider its findings and recommendations and tables its response to the Inquiry accordingly.
Recommendation 2 The Committee recommends that the Queensland Government advocate for the development of a nationally consistent, operational definition of elder abuse, including clear delineation of age. The Committee recommends terminology be developed through a consultation process with key stakeholders and is consistently applied across all social services.	Support	Terminology regarding "elder abuse" has recently been considered by all Australian jurisdictions following extensive consultation with the public, stakeholders, people with lived experience, and government agencies through the development of the <i>National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People</i> (the Second National Plan). The Queensland Government will engage with its stakeholders to ensure the terminology and definitions used in the Second National Plan are applied consistently across Queensland social services, as appropriate.
Recommendation 3 The Committee encourages the Queensland Government to continue its work to implement the draft National Plan to End the Abuse and	Support	The Queensland Government will implement this recommendation through its ongoing involvement in the implementation of the Second National Plan and subsequent Action Plans.

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Mistreatment of Older People 2024-2034 to address elder abuse.		
Recommendation 4 The Committee recommends that the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety undertake work to enhance data collection and reporting across funded services, to improve responses to elder abuse in Queensland. The Committee requests consideration be given to: • Bolstering the work of the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit's existing data collection and reporting • Developing a consistent approach to collecting and reporting data across services, to improve understanding of the nature and extent of elder abuse in Queensland; and • Fostering a culture of data sharing between government and funding agencies to better inform service provision and improve outcomes.	Support in principle	The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety will continue work to enhance data collection and reporting across funded services and Queensland Government agencies to improve and inform: • evidence-based planning and mapping; • understanding the nature and prevalence of the abuse of older people in Queensland; and • future investment in awareness, prevention, support services, programs and initiatives.
Recommendation 5 The Committee recommends that a whole of government response to accessibility and navigation issues within government systems be undertaken with age friendly processes and policy development prioritised to simplify systems and enhance the customer service experience of seniors.	Support	The Queensland Government acknowledges the importance of ensuring government systems are accessible, easy to navigate, and inclusive for all, particularly older people. The Queensland Government will develop a whole-of-government approach to address accessibility and navigation issues within Queensland Government systems, embedding age-friendly processes and

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		practices across government and enhancing the customer service experience for older people.
Recommendation 6 The Committee recommends that the Queensland Government promote digital literacy programs through the delivery of the Tech Savvy Seniors initiative, or similar training programs, to reduce the digital divide and provide enhanced access to resources for regional Queenslanders.	Support	The Queensland Government recognises the need for choice to reduce the digital divide for older Queenslanders. The Queensland Government will support older people to access the suite of existing digital literacy programs and initiatives to reduce the digital divide, with a particular focus on providing resources for regional Queenslanders. This may include supporting and promoting the Australian Government's Be Connected program and other state-based programs as appropriate.
Recommendation 7 The Committee recommends the Queensland Government leverage communication and education investments for ageism and elder abuse awareness to improve understanding in society and foster a cultural shift towards greater respect for older members of the Queensland community.	Support in principle	The Queensland Government will investigate opportunities to leverage communication and education investment to improve awareness, prevention and understanding of abuse of older people and consider opportunities to address ageism to foster a cultural shift towards greater respect for older people in the community.
Recommendation 8 The Committee recommends that in seeking to address social isolation as a contributor to elder abuse vulnerability, the Queensland Government further resource social prescribing initiatives and extend its work to addressing social isolation experienced by seniors.	For further consideration	The Queensland Government recognises social isolation can increase vulnerability to abuse of older people and is committed to exploring effective ways to strengthen social connections and support for older Queenslanders from all backgrounds. A trial of social prescribing is currently underway across ten locations in Queensland.

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Recommendation 9 The Committee recommends that the Queensland Government consider expanding the Seniors Legal and Support Service and Seniors Social Isolation Services to enhance access for regional, rural and remote areas of Queensland.	For further consideration	The Queensland Government recognises social isolation and loneliness are significant issues for older people and may be a contributing factor in increasing the risk of abuse of older people.
Recommendation 14 The Committee recommends that in seeking to address financial vulnerabilities, the Queensland Government consider expanding the Seniors Financial Protection Services to enhance access for regional, rural and remotes areas of Queensland.		The Queensland Government will consider the need for additional social isolation services and consider expanding the Seniors Legal and Support Service and Seniors Financial Protection Services, to enhance access across new and existing locations in regional, rural, and remote areas of Queensland.
Recommendation 10 The Committee recommends that a panel of experts be appointed to consider reform of capacity judgement frameworks used by government agencies, with a view to providing further supported decision-making to ensure the aspirations and views of the individual are recognised and supported.	Support in principle	The Queensland Government will continue undertaking a statutory review of the <i>Queensland Capacity Assessment Guidelines 2020</i>. As part of the review, the Queensland Government is consulting with subject-matter experts from a variety of sectors including academic, legal, guardianship, and disability. In consultation with key stakeholders, the Queensland Government will also explore options to further provide supported decision-making, including consideration of relevant recommendations from the <i>Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability Final Report</i> (DRC Final Report).

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Recommendation 11 The Committee recommends the Queensland Government use the experiences provided in this report to give voice in advocating for the Standing Council of Attorneys-General to prioritise the harmonisation of enduring power of attorney legislation.	For further consideration	The Queensland Government recognises that adequate safeguards are needed in relation to enduring powers of attorney (EPOAs) to prevent the abuse of older people. The Queensland Government looks forward to working with the Commonwealth and other states and territories to continue efforts to achieve national consistency in EPOA legislation through the Standing Council of Attorneys-General (SCAG).
Recommendation 13 The Committee recommends that the Queensland Government advocate for further consideration of the development of a national register of enduring powers of attorney.		SCAG has previously considered a national EPOA register, however this was not accepted at this time on the basis it would have inherent limitations including introducing complexity, costs and practical barriers to people making and using EPOAs. Instead, SCAG agreed to focus on national EPOA harmonisation, and education and awareness raising aimed at reducing abuse of older people occurring through EPOAs. The Queensland Government thanks the Committee for its fulsome review of the complexities with EPOA legislation and will continue to participate in any ongoing discussions in relation to this work, led by the Commonwealth.

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Recommendation 12 The Committee recommends that the Queensland Government develop educational resources about the purpose and responsibilities of an Enduring Power of Attorney.	Support	The Queensland Government acknowledges the importance of planning ahead for later years, and rights and obligations in relation to various life planning documents (such as EPOAs). Consistent with the Committee's recommendation, the Queensland Government has identified opportunities to improve EPOA educational resources including resources about the purpose of an EPOA, responsibilities of an attorney, and misapplication of EPOAs.
Recommendation 15 The Committee recommends that the Queensland Government progress work to improve safeguarding of adults with care and support needs who are unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect.	For further consideration	The Queensland Government acknowledges the importance of safeguarding adults with care and support needs who are unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect. The Queensland Government notes the Committee heard a range of views on options to improve adult safeguarding in Queensland.
Recommendation 16 The Committee recommends the Public Guardian be resourced to lead adult safeguarding in Queensland including the coordination and provision of supportive interventions with maximum autonomy for adults with care and support needs who are unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect.		Work is underway to identify options to improve supported decision-making for adults with impaired capacity as part of the Queensland Government response to the DRC Final Report. Careful analysis and consideration would be required to ensure other measures introduced are informed by expert advice, stakeholders, people with lived experience of abuse or neglect and best practice approaches for Queensland.