

Non-English speaking Australians at higher risk of financial elder abuse

New research reveals non-English speaking Australians are at higher risk of financial elder abuse due to their dependency on others for translation, transactions and services relating to the management of their finances.

Diversity and financial elder abuse in Victoria is the fourth report of the Protecting Elders Assets Study (PEAS) on financial elder abuse undertaken by Monash University and commissioned by State Trustees.

Data was drawn from 76 survey respondents aged 65 – 100 who were surveyed on their current and planned fi-

ancial management strategies. Sixty two respondents were from non-English speaking backgrounds, including Greek, Italian and Vietnamese cultures.

“The study found that non-English speaking participants, in particular the Italian and Vietnamese groups, relied heavily on their English-speaking children to manage their day-to-day financial affairs. These tasks include renting property, paying bills and engaging with institutions such as banks, real estate agents and government departments on behalf of their parents,” State Trustees’ Managing Director Tony Fitzgerald, said.

“As was observed in previous studies

with English-speaking participants, participants in this study were aware of instances of financial elder abuse, however believed it would be unlikely to happen to them. Sadly this commonly held belief among older Australians directly conflicts with past findings which suggest family members, in particular children, are the most common perpetrators of financial elder abuse,” Mr Fitzgerald said.

The study also found that non-English speaking respondents were less likely to have prepared personal financial and legal documents, such as an Enduring Power of Attorney (Financial); a document that gives an individual or organisation the power to make financial and legal decisions on another person’s behalf should they become incapacitated.

“Many older people from non-Eng-

lish speaking backgrounds avoid preparing an EPA because they trust their family will know what to do in the event they lose capacity. However, they often fail to fully appreciate the complexity of such a responsibility and the heavy burden it places on their loved ones,” Mr Fitzgerald said.

Mr Fitzgerald encourages older Australians to thoroughly explore their financial and legal options before making any firm decisions about the future management of their financial affairs.

“In many cases older people are simply unaware about what services and products are available to them. If they choose to, individuals can outsource the future management of their financial affairs to a professional, helping to circumvent potential family conflict and financial mismanagement,” Mr Fitzgerald said.

Coen signs 1000 to organ donor register

Thirteen-year-old Coen Ashton has successfully completed his seven week journey down the Murray River by jet-ski to raise awareness of organ donation, recruiting 1000 new registrations for the Australian Organ Donor Register.

Coen has cystic fibrosis and diabetes and needs a double lung transplant.

He travelled 2000km by jet-ski from Yarrowonga in Victoria to Goowla in South Australia, promoting organ and tissue donation and the importance of people discussing their donation decision with their families.

Human Services Portfolio General Manager Hank Jongen today said Medicare Australia created a specially encoded Australian Organ Donation Registration form to ensure registrations were counted towards Coen’s 1000.

“As the administrator of the Australian Organ Donor Register, Medicare Australia is proud to get behind Coen’s organ donation drive,” Mr Jongen said.

“It has helped encourage registration and highlight the importance of discussing your organ donation decision.”

A Medicare Branch Manager will visit Coen at Adelaide’s Women’s and Children’s Hospital tomorrow (Tuesday, 29 March) to collect the completed registration forms.

Coen’s mother, Dawn Ashton, today thanked those who helped along the way.

“We have really appreciated the support of the public and Medicare Australia throughout Coen’s journey,” Ms Ashton said.

“Thank you to everyone who signed onto the Australian Organ Donation Register to help Coen achieve his goal.”

In Australia family consent is always sought before donation can proceed, even if the deceased had registered their donation wishes. This is why it is so important for families to have a memorable discussion about organ and tissue donation and know the donation wishes of their loved ones.



Greek Orthodox protest id cards plan

Several thousand Orthodox Christian fundamentalists have marched through central Athens to protest a government plan to issue new electronic ID cards they say would include the number 666, or the ‘number of the beast’, hidden in a design. The protesters claim the state aims for tighter control over its citizens and many believe that the design of the cards includes the number described in the Book of Revelation. The cards will include biometric information. The mostly elderly crowd includes hundreds of Orthodox priests, monks and nuns and a few dozen members of far-right groups.

Most of the crowd dispersed upon reaching the parliament at Athens’ central Syntagma Square, heading off to dozens of waiting buses that have carried them from across the country.



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The artist Dina Tourva will guide you through the green and rocky landscape of her island, Ikaria, to discover the eternal beauty of its unique, traditional stone houses and chapels, illustrated by her paintings, presented here in a digital slide show. Dina will talk about the history of this simple but impressive architecture and her concerns regarding its preservation.

Date Wed 30 March
 Venue Greek Community Club of NSW, 206-210 Lakemba Street, Lakemba
 Cost Free Entry Contact (02) 9750 0440
 Language Greek - www.greekfestivalofsydney.com.au
 Time 7.00pm