

Applying problem-oriented policing to elder abuse

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Review into the Prevalence and
Characteristics of Elder Abuse
in Queensland



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August 2017



Elder Abuse happens.
Know the signs, make it stop.

Visit www.qld.gov.au/knowthesigns
or call 1300 651 192.



Queensland
Health



Opportunity is key

*“Suppose all situational controls were to be abandoned: no locks, no custom controls, cash left for parking in an open pot for occasional collection, no library check-outs, no baggage screening at airports, no ticket checks at train stations, no traffic lights, etc., **would there be no change in the volume of crime and disorder?**” (Laycock & Tilley, 1995)*

- Crime is lowered when opportunities blocked/not present
- Need to understand specific, proximal opportunities available for specific types of crime/abuse

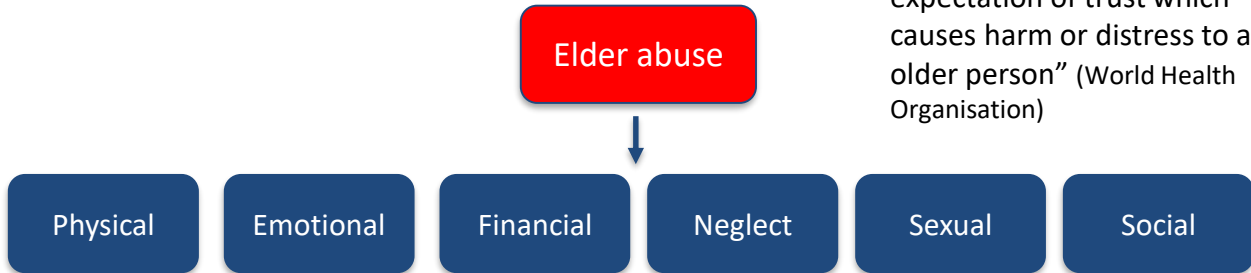
Problem Oriented Policing Framework

- **S**canning – what is the problem?
- **A**nalysis – what are the characteristics of the problem?
- **R**esponse – what should be done about the problem?
- **A**ssessment – was the response successful?

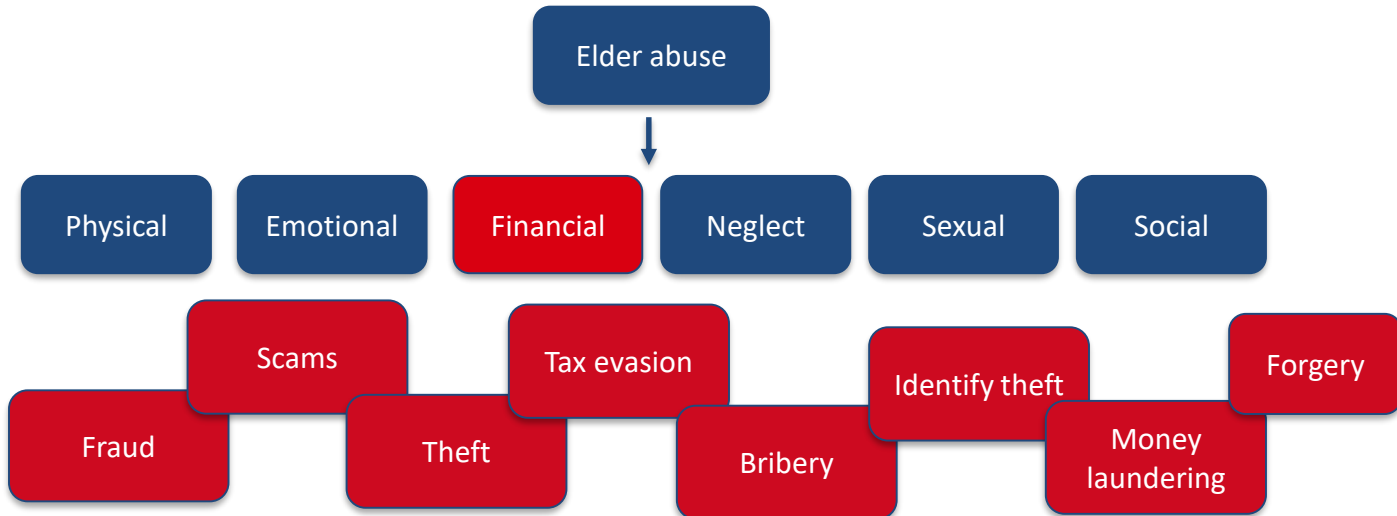


Scanning - Be specific

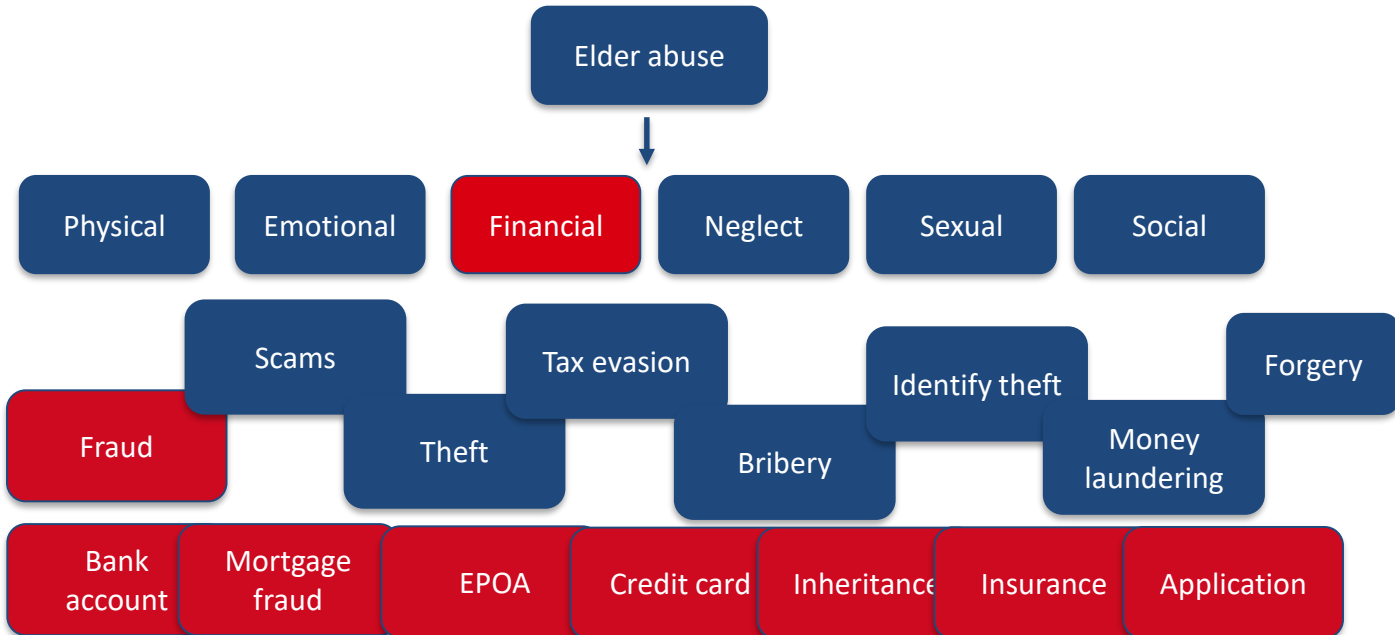
“a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person” (World Health Organisation)



Scanning - Be specific



Scanning - Be specific



Analysis – Understanding the problem

WHO

- Victims/offenders
- Demographics
- Related/paid position/stranger
- Third parties

WHERE

- Private residence/aged care
- Online/business
- Previous complaints

WHEN

- Time of day/day of week
- Specific shifts

HOW

- How did offender engage/complete crime/abuse



Drilling down = clearer understanding of opportunities
and characteristics



Develop appropriate, targeted responses to prevent the
specific problem



Response - What should be done about the problem?

*“When people perceive that there is **no risk** of detection of a crime, when there is **a reward**, and when there is **an excuse** for criminal behaviour, previously law abiding-people are **more likely to commit a crime**” (Prichard, 2017)*

1. Increase the **risks** of offending
2. Increase the **effort** of offending
3. Reduce the **reward** of offending
4. Reduce the **provocations** for offending
5. Remove the **excuses** for offending



Assessment – did it work???

- Measures depend on the problem
 - Reduced calls for police service
 - Reduced helpline calls
 - Reduced hospital admissions
 - Reduced number of referrals
 - Reduced number of complaints
 - Increased sense of safety
 - Reduced financial losses



Work in progress...

POP applied to financial elder abuse



Helpful Resources

- Ron Clarke & John Eck (2005). Crime analysis for problem solvers in 60 small steps. Center for Problem for Oriented Policing:
<http://www.popcenter.org/library/reading/PDFs/60steps.pdf>
- Kelly Johnson (2002). Financial crimes against the elderly. Center for Problem Oriented Policing:
https://cops.usdoj.gov/html/cd_rom/popguides/pubs/COPS_P013.pdf
- Bryan Payne (2013). Physical and emotional abuse of the elderly. Center for Problem Oriented Policing:
http://www.popcenter.org/problems/pdfs/elderly_abuse.pdf

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