

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**

**WRITTEN QUESTION**

Mrs Hersey to the Minister for Seniors:

**Elder Abuse**

- 1. What, if any, Northern Territory Government initiatives are currently aimed at addressing the safety of seniors and elder abuse? What is the budget for these and what was expended in the 2021/22 financial year?**

**Answer:**

The Northern Territory Government, through the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (the Department), has a three year funding agreement with Darwin Community Legal Service (DCLS) that commenced in January 2020 until December 2022. This funding agreement total is \$900,000 to operate the Elder Persons Strategic Advocacy Project.

DCLS delivers the following with this funding:

- raising awareness of the concerns impacting seniors, providing support and information for older people experiencing abuse, and exploring local responses to the issues;
- a campaign highlighting elder abuse prevention and created a television advertisement to raise awareness on support available across the Territory, launched on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on 15 June 2022; and
- an Elder Person's Abuse: Safety Toolkit for service providers, to assist in identifying and responding to elder abuse.

- 2. What, if any, Northern Territory Government initiatives are currently aimed at addressing ageism? What is the budget for these and what was expended in the 2021/22 financial year?**

**Answer:**

The Northern Territory Government, through the Department, provided funding to the Council on the Ageing Northern Territory, and Association of Independent Retirees NT totaling \$252,000 in the 2021/22 financial year to support and advocate for seniors in the Northern Territory.

The funding provides:

- information, advocacy and support services to the senior community; and
- media promoting active, healthy ageing, and community representation and advocacy available for senior Territorians.

The Northern Territory Government, through the Department, distributed 47 grants totaling \$64,100 in the 2021/22 financial year, specifically focusing on activities and events to celebrate seniors for Northern Territory Seniors Month.

All of the funds have been expended.

3. **Has the Seniors Recognition Scheme been examined for the potential for financial elder abuse? Have any investigations occurred into the potential for financial abuse, or individual cases of possible elder abuse?**

**Answer:**

The Northern Territory Seniors Recognition Scheme (NTSRS) follows the same compliance standards for verification of identity as bank cards, this measure is in place to limit fraudulent activity. The NTSRS also has measures in place which requires members to have an Authority to Act form on record for third parties. The NTSRS visa debit cards are issued to members with an information sheet which provides guidance on keeping the card safe, includes the contact details for the National Elder Abuse Phone Line and how to dispute transactions, such as fraudulent and unrecognised transactions. Members are also supported by the customer service team to resolve queries and concerns and are on referred to the required services and support.

To the Departments knowledge, no investigations have occurred regarding individual cases of possible elder abuse of the SRS debit card.

4. **What, if any, Northern Territory Government initiatives are currently aimed at enabling older workers to fill job vacancies? What is the budget for these and what was expended in the 2021/22 financial year?**

**Answer:**

The Northern Territory Seniors Policy (the Policy) 2021-26 was released in August 2021. The Policy acknowledges active ageing and age-friendly communities, supporting senior Territorians in independence and wellbeing. The Policy outcomes and actions are set out across four key priority areas: Economic Participation and Financial Security, Safety and Security, Health and Wellbeing and Social Inclusion and Diversity.

The roll-out of the Seniors Policy between 2022 and 2024, is underpinned by an Implementation Plan that details how relevant Northern Territory Government agencies will meet their roles and responsibilities under the policy.

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment has run a Northern Territory Public Service Inclusion and Diversity campaign to raise awareness and provide agencies with materials that support an inclusive and diverse workforce which includes an ageing workforce framework.

Agencies are managing commitments within their existing programs and funding.