



### Tool 4.3: Barriers to reporting

Reporting the abuse of older people supports the prevention of abuse reoccurring by providing a pathway to support and safety. The points below list some of the key barriers to reporting abuse from the perspective of the older person and staff. Understanding these reasons means that barriers can be addressed through support, training and providing information.

What are some of the reasons older people may not report abuse?	What are some of the reasons staff may not report abuse?
Dependence on the person who is abusing them.	Staff have different experiences and expectations. The abuse may resemble something that has happened in the staff member's life and they have normalised the behaviour, not recognising it as abuse.
Family conflict and fear of losing important relationships.	Staff may be unsure of procedures and don't know who to talk to or what to do.
A history of domestic and family violence, ongoing fear and difficulty talking about it.	An older person may not want to report abuse.
Cognitive impairment.	Concerns about breaching client confidentiality and privacy.
Isolation from others.	Lack of awareness about what abuse can look like - may be some cultural differences that influence how abuse is perceived.
Lack of knowledge of available support services.	Concerned that services may be cancelled.
Fear of retribution or punishment.	Unsure if it is abuse.
Fear of repercussions, e.g. being placed in residential aged care.	
Denial or disbelief that it is happening to them.	
Unaware of their rights.	
"It's private" - ashamed to tell others.	
Previous inaction or action that did not work.	
Limited English.	
Lack of awareness about what abuse can look like - may be some cultural differences that influence how abuse is perceived.	
No cultural supports or networks to turn to, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders or people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	