

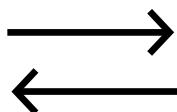
Harmful Attitudes and Beliefs: Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) of Older Women and Women with Disability

This factsheet looks at some of the most common and harmful stereotypes about older women and women with disability. These stereotypes can affect how people respond when an older woman or woman with disability makes a disclosure about DFSV.

Being aware of these harmful attitudes and beliefs can help improve how you identify, prevent and respond to DFSV of older women and women with disability.

Common Stereotypes

- Women with disability are vulnerable and in need of protection.
- Older women are responsible for keeping the family unit together.
- Older women and women with disability are burdens and should be grateful to receive support.
- Women with disability are childlike and can not handle adult responsibilities.
- Women with cognitive impairments are not reliable witnesses.
- Women with dementia won't remember a physical or sexual assault, so it should not be discussed or reported.



Potential Outcomes

- Abuse is minimised particularly when carried out by someone in a position of care.
- Having control over older women or women with disability is normal and accepted.
- Women are not believed when they disclose abuse.
- Older women and women with disability are blamed for abuse.
- Older women and women with disability are not asked if they are experiencing abuse, particularly sexual abuse.

For more information and resources on identifying and responding to DFSV of older women and women with disability, visit adc.nsw.gov.au

Any concerns about the immediate safety of an older woman or woman with disability should be reported to **emergency services (000)**.

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