



Accompanying notes for *Recognising Ageism and Changing Mindsets*

Slide 1

Introduction

Welcome to Volunteering SA&NT's Wellness and Reablement resources and training for Commonwealth Home Support Provider volunteers and volunteer coordinators. This training: *Recognising Ageism and Changing Mindsets*, aims to stimulate thinking about the prevalence of ageism in today's society and what we might be able to do to lessen the effects of ageism in our workplaces, and in society in general.

The effects of ageism stereotypes impact on outcomes in the lives of older people and on their potential for wellness and reablement. When assumptions and expectations are made about what older people are capable of, their choices and activities may be limited. In order to promote wellness and reablement fully, we need to address and limit the effects of ageism in our organisations and services.

Using this training is easy, you can display it on a data projector and work through it in a group, or you can watch and listen to the PowerPoint individually in your own time. If you are a volunteer coordinator you may prefer to conduct the training yourself. You can download the PDF version of the slides from the Volunteering SA&NT website. There are interactive exercises in all of our training, and participants will benefit from discussing the concepts in groups.

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Objectives

The overall aim for this training is to introduce and discuss the concept of ageism, and how it potentially impacts on the delivery of services to older people. We'll look at how ageism is prevalent in the media, and discuss a definition of ageism from the World Health Organisation. We'll be listening to Ashton Applewhite's TED talk, which you may find very enlightening. We will examine the concept of elder-speak as mentioned by Ashton Applewhite in the clip. Finally, we'll take a look at the process of change management and how to implement change.

Slide 3

Aged Care Images Exercise

Activity

Using your phone, tablet or laptop, do an internet search for the words "aged care images". When you get the result take a look at the images and see if you can identify any theme or themes that are common to them. Share your thoughts with someone else if you are working in a group.

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<p>Slide 4 Aged Care Images Exercise - discussion</p>	<p>What kind of images did you find when you searched 'aged care images' on the internet? Often the images are mainly carers or clinical staff attending to an older person or persons. The carer is often a younger person, standing over an older person, and the older person is often portrayed as frail, dependent, or giving the impression they are no longer able to do much for themselves. If you repeat this exercise using "in home care" as the search term, you will find similar images.</p> <p>Why is it that older people are often portrayed this way in the media? Have a discussion about this if you are working in a group.</p>
<p>Slide 5 Definition of Ageism – W.H.O.</p>	<p>You can find examples of this kind of stereotyping older people in the media and perhaps even in general conversation with family and friends.</p> <p>What exactly is ageism? Here is the definition from the World Health Organisation. Take some time to read it through. If you are working in a group, select key words or points and discuss.</p> <p>Is there anything you find challenging about this definition? Can you think of real-life examples relating to the definition?</p>
<p>Slide 6 Fact or Fiction?</p>	<p>With this slide we examine a set of statements about older people. Think about whether you agree or disagree with them. If you're watching this presentation in a group, have a discussion about these. It's interesting to hear people's view on these points; the discussion can be quite robust!</p> <p>Each of the beliefs on this slide come from a publication by the Queensland Government Department of Communities entitled Ageing – Myth and Reality. While we cannot explore each point fully here, there is compelling evidence presented in the book to suggest that each of them is in fact a myth.</p> <p>On the next slide we're going to watch a video clip featuring Ashton Applewhite, a writer and activist who challenges us to think differently about growing older. She writes: 'Ageing is a natural, life-long, powerful process that unites us all,' and argues that ageism is the last socially sanctioned prejudice, leading us to a negative view of life growing older. You will need to click on the link on the slide to view the video.</p>
<p>Slide 7 Let's end ageism Ashton Applewhite</p>	<p>click here to view the video</p>

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Slide 8 Elder Speak

Ashton Applewhite is certainly a passionate advocate for older people and positive views of ageing. One of the things she mentioned was the idea of *elder-speak*. This form of ageism, can be another way of marking a power differential between carer and older person.

How do you feel about 'elder-speak'?

Are there any times when it seems appropriate?

What if this kind of language is reciprocated by an older person? Is it appropriate then?

If you are working in a group have a short discussion about this.

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Changing Mindsets

In this section of the presentation we will discuss the process of change and of changing mindsets. In the previous sections we examined stereotypes and how they can limit our interactions with older people, potentially with planning and providing our services. To help people change thinking about older people, we can employ a process of change management.

One well-recognised process for change management that can be used to create organisational change is known by the acronym **ADKAR**: which stands for **Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Action** and **Reinforcement**. More information about ADKAR can easily be found by doing a Google search.

Eg <https://www.prosci.com/adkar/adkar-model>

In the first stage of the process, **awareness**, we recognise that there is an issue - in this case that ageism and stereotyping can limit or damage the way we work with older people. There are good reasons to change this thinking, such as allowing us to provide services better suited to clients' needs without making assumptions about them, and helping us to see older people as independent and capable of making decisions.

While we can have an awareness of issues and the reasons for addressing them, unless there is a **desire** to change things, nothing further will occur. This is where we need to clearly articulate and communicate the benefits for stakeholders. By changing mindsets about ageism we could see benefits such as promoting needs-based services, greater client satisfaction, and greater opportunity for wellness and reablement.

When we establish a commitment to change throughout the organisation we can determine the skills and knowledge required to bring about the change. We need **knowledge** about ageism, stereotypes and the skill to communicate that knowledge to others.

We can **action** meetings with other volunteers and/or paid staff to discuss ways to limit the effects of ageism and stereotypes in our organisations. We could ask clients about any experiences of ageism that they themselves have had.

To achieve **reinforcement** of the change, we can celebrate examples of success in confronting ageism.

Communication through conversation is the most powerful tool in this process of change. To quote Danny Steele, "You don't change culture through emails and memos. You change it through relationships...one conversation at a time."

Discuss the process of change management in your organisation. Who could lead this process?
What would an action plan look like?

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Thank you

Thank you for using this presentation, Awareness of an issue alone is the first step toward a solution to a problem.

You can view our other wellness and reablement training modules for volunteers and volunteer coordinators in this series on Volunteering SA&NT's [CHSP web page](#).

If you want more information or need support for your volunteer program, contact us by emailing reception@volunteeringsa-nt.org.au Volunteering SA&NT can also deliver this training free of charge for CHSP provider organisations.

The Volunteering SA&NT website has useful information and resources on all aspects of volunteering.
www.volunteeringsa.org.au