

The Embolden2024 Festival presents

[un]Silencing Older Women

Online program, Oct 2-3, 2024

Everyone deserves to be safe, valued and equal. However, older women are often silenced and too little has been done to combat the ageism, sexism, poverty, homelessness, elder abuse, family violence, matricide and sexual assault they face. #Embolden2024 offers a rare platform to hear the voices of older women and bridge the gap between how things are, and how they need to be. Delegates will survey critical issues facing older women and share practical strategies for The [un]Silencing of Older Women.

Day One: 2nd October, 2.00-4.30pm

Congress of Older Women's Voices from the Margins

2.00pm: MC Sarah Liversidge acknowledge Traditional owners

2.00-2.20: Keynote: Aunty Dixie Link-Gordon, Aunty in Residence Full Stop Australia

2.20-2.30: Welcome

- Welcome, Sarah Liversidge
- Partner message: Yumi Lee, CEO Older Women's Network NSW

2.30-3.30pm: The Voices of Older Women

- Work for change, Anshul
- The costs of financial hardship, Ms Emme
- Caring for someone living with dementia, Penny Bingham
- Keynote: Speaking the unspeakable, Robyn Westgate, Curtin University.

3.30-3.35pm: Short Break

3.35-4.20pm: Discussion

Delegates will be invited to share their reflections on how older women are silenced, what they have learned from Congress, how to give voice to older women's lives and what they will do with what they now know.

4.20-4.30pm: Closing & next steps.

Day Two: 3rd October, 2.00-5.00pm

Symposium Part 1: Key issues

The first part of the Symposium invites us to reflect on the way we want the world to be, explores the structural obstacles to equality for older women and poses solutions and drivers of change. Delegates will have access to a Resource Pack with links and information on key topics and the option to participate in two online follow up sessions on the difference we make.

Welcome by MC Dr Catherine Barrett (2.00-2.15pm)

- **Welcome and acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**
- **Partner message** Debra Nicholl CEO of Elder Rights Advocacy

Discussions (2.15-3.15pm)

What we see, what we say – it does make a difference

Dr Catherine Barrett and Professor Kate Burrige explore representations of older women in popular culture. Drawing on Citizen Research conducted for The Biscuit Tin project – the themes of “Grannies, Cougars and Greedy Old Bags” are presented. The role of these representations in the inequality, abuse and violence experienced by older women is also explored.

Family violence and abuse - a life stages approach

Investigative Journalist Jess Hill and Yumi Lee, CEO of the Older Women’s Network of NSW discuss the increase in family violence and murder of older women; and present a life stages approach to help end the silencing of older women. Then Associate Professor Laura Tarzia joins the conversation to discuss how a life stages approach could support older women who are sexual assaulted or abused in the context of family violence.

Building a world where older women count

Celebrate Ageing Ltd Research Coordinator Robyn Smith shares reflections from #TheBiscuitTin project - valuing the contributions of older women. Sarah Codling From Whitehorse City Council will discuss the role of local Council in promoting culture change that unlocks the voices of older women. Dilnaz Billimoria will speak about her experience participating in the Whitehorse City Council project and the importance to culturally diverse communities and The Sisterhood.

Symposium – Part 2: Strategies for change

Part two of the Symposium begins by considering Gender Lenses for preventing Elder Abuse. Then delegates are invited to join concurrent sessions highlighting innovations to help end the silencing of older women.

Plenaries (3.15-3.45pm)

- *A Gender Lens for Elder Abuse prevention*: Debra Nicholl, CEO Elder Rights Advocacy and Geoff Rowe, CEO ADA Australia
- *Police Safeguarding and Empowering Community*: Assistant Commissioner Lauren Callaway, Victoria Police

Concurrent sessions (3.45-4.30pm)

Delegates are encouraged to use the Q and A function to ask questions of the presenters or add their own suggestions. Key points will be included in the Embolden report.

Concurrent session 1: Learning together

Chairs: Sarah Liversidge and Deb Barndon

- *Partnerships between Elder Abuse Prevention and Women's Health Services in Melbourne's east*: Jill Exon, Elder Abuse Prevention Lead, Eastern Community Legal Centre
- *Educating family violence and sexual assault services*: Deb Barndon, Coordinator of the Project Manager, Older Women's Network NSW
- The ELSA project (Elder Sexual Abuse), Di MacLeod, Director Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence
- *Empowering older people as teachers*: Jo Brown, Manager Community Services & Development, Mpower.

Concurrent session 2: Outreach

Chairs: Richard Joseph and Meg Humphrey

- *Stronger Together - police safeguarding and empowering community*: Chris Lee, Community Portfolio Manager, Priority and Safer Communities, Victoria Police and Debra Nicholl CEO of Elder Rights Advocacy
- *Data collection as outreach*: Anna Gillbard, Research Officer, Elder Abuse Prevention Unit, UnitingCare Qld
- *Auditing inclusion in digital spaces*: Meg Humphrey, Elder Abuse Prevention Project Coordinator, Active and Healthy Ageing, Merri Health
- *Local libraries empowering older women*, Dominique Horne, ACAS Melbourne Health.

Concurrent session 3: Empowering older women

Chairs: Yumi Lee and June Lowe

- *Recipes for Connection*, Christine Hall, Project Consultant Older Women's Network NSW
- *Lesbians who lunch*: June Lowe, Projects Coordinator Celebrate Ageing Ltd
- *Al-Emaan Women's Group*, Hayat Doughan, Ageing Well Lead, Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria
- *Pathways to employment*: Sharon Stone, Coordinator Pathways to Employment, Older Women's Network NSW
- *Barwon Urban Knitting Project*: Ally Upton, Community Engagement Officer Barwon Community Legal Service

Concurrent session 4: Working with families/communities

Chairs: Catherine Barrett and Melissa Williams

- *When a family member has dementia*: Steve Grady, Dementia Advocate and Educator
- *There's a Rainbow in My Family*: Manika Conning
- *Working with families*, Lauren Tyrell, RACF and Elder Abuse Practitioner, Better Place Australia
- *Art against ageism*, Louise Singleton, Elder Abuse Prevention Coordinator, Peninsula Health.

Symposium - Closing (4.30-5.00pm)

The closing session includes reflections from the Age Discrimination Commissioner and an announcement about resources for delegates. The final words come from an older woman – on the importance of speaking up and challenging the silence.

- *Reflections on The Silencing of Older Women*: Age Discrimination Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald AM (15 mins)
- *Resources and next steps*: Dr Catherine Barrett, Director Celebrate Ageing Ltd (5 mins)
- *Joyful Rage*: Dr Deborah Wood, Artist (10 mins).

Thankyou for being part of #Embalden2024