

## Aid prevents seniors' rip-offs

Sunbury residents are being urged to inform themselves about elder abuse amid reports that it's occurring regularly.

Sunbury Community Health (SCH) has launched a campaign to promote awareness about the problem after a steady flow of complaints by seniors.

Health worker Maria Bowman said she had dealt with 15 reports in the past two years, many relating to financial deception. She had no doubt many more residents had been victims of elder abuse, which can also be physical, sexual, psychological or social.

"The most common form is financial, which can be anything from people moving with their wife and kids into grandma's house and using her concession to pay the bills, through to people taking over land titles," Ms Bowman said.

"It's also extremely common for elderly people to give a trusted loved one control over their bank key card, so they can pay their bills for them.

"It's then very easy for someone to siphon off small amounts without it being detected."

Ms Bowman said SCH offered free, confidential support and could quickly connect people with solicitors and Seniors Rights Victoria.

"Clients can raise concerns while talking to a physical therapist or dietitian.

"It can be a simple discussion about their concerns and talking through a safety plan."

**Matt Crossman**