

Ageism

V 1.0.1

Language to avoid



AdvocateNT.AU

Stand up, speak out - silence is never a solution

Ageist Language - what is it?

- Ageist language can or does invoke harmful stereotypes of older people.
- It can play negative impacts on policy, attitudes, employment, healthcare and other opportunities for older people.
- Using Ageist terminology in healthcare and hospitals often results in the older person feeling hopeless and excluded from services and care that healthcare rights should include to all persons.



Ageist Language - what is it?

- Ageist language excludes older people from the rest of the population.
- Ageist Language includes but not limited to words such as “elderly”, “seniors” or “the aged”, and we are all guilty of using such language.
- We must transition away from ageist language and put the person first, included and positive to ensure the best use of resources and best outcomes for all persons.



Ageist Language - what is it?

- Ageist language shapes perceptions of aging, often carries negative assumptions.
- Ageist terms such as “elderly”, “senior” or “the aged” imply weakness and groups the person rather than a focus on the individual.
- Words and phrases that reflect stereotypes or discrimination against older adults.



Ageist Language - what is it?

- Person-first language emphasizes the individual before any descriptor (e.g. “older adults experiencing memory loss”).
- Avoiding terms that evoke dependency helps maintain dignity in communication.
- “Elderspeak” is a patronising way of speaking to older adults.
- Patronising language is disrespectful and lead to resistance in healthcare services.



Ageist Language - what is it?

Ageist language occurs in our hospitals

- Doctor telling a patient that surgery is not an option because they are old.
- Hospital lowering the priority of procedures because the patient is an older person, not listening to lived experiences or impacts to the patient.
- Doctor showing disrespect by not allowing the person to complete what they are saying in describing a health concern.



Ageist Language - A vehicle for older person abuse

- In very real terms ageist language is one of the hidden in plain site vehicles that delivers abuse of the older person.
- Abuse of the older person exists today in many sectors including healthcare, agedcare, workplaces, within community and families.
- Ageist language (ageism drives isolation, feelings of hopelessness, untrust, permanent harm to a person's wellbeing and complications in health).



When is a persons age consideration important?

- While ageist language is inappropriate, in a medical setting hospital personnel (either doctors or administration) must understand and consider the increased risks associated with older persons.
- It is not appropriate to reduce or stop medical services because of older age groups or to provide services that may introduce increased harm.
- Often hospital administration personnel override trained medical professionals directions.



Speaking engagements

Craig Hubbard is available for speaking engagements.

Contact us at <https://advocateNT.au>

- ✓ Older person abuse
- ✓ Workplace Abuse
- ✓ Lived experiences



AdvocateNT.AU

Stand up, speak out - silence is never a solution