

**Legal Support in a Collaborative System Panel.  
Fiona Payne, Judica Cornelis, Joanne Howard.**

**Fiona Payne is the support counsellor in the Seniors Legal and Support Service, Harvey Bay Queensland.**

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- Our service was established in 2007 by the Department of Communities .
- Five offices were set up in, Brisbane, Townsville, Murwillumbah, Harvey Bay.
- We began as a pilot project, Queensland government just announced from July 2010 we will be receiving ongoing funding.
- We can provide support to people aged sixty and older.
- We have addressed 230 cases of abuse against older people and provided information/advice on 675 matters.
- Our work has involved \$2.7 million dollars in cash and assets lost by clients and \$9 million dollars identified as at risk.
- Generally in the past our clients haven't approached legal services, but these pilots bring together the skills of a social worker and a legal worker. The range of support services within one organisation is fantastic.

**Two scenarios:**

- older men, in 80s-90s relationships with younger women 32-38, we have about eight of those cases in the last 6 months. They change their will and sign the title of the houses over in exchange for care, when the will is changed often the older man is put in an aged care facility.
- older women who experience DV. Usually in the beginning of the relationship there were no services available to contact and with ageing, violence takes its toll on the body. (broken bones and wounds not healing etc.) so older women contact services.