

Lucy and Peter's Story

Mary asked her parents if her family could stay for a few weeks while they found a rental property. It became clear they were making no attempts to find alternative accommodation.



Facts

In 2019, *Mary and her adult children turned up with suitcases to her elderly parents, Lucy and Peter's, home. Mary told her parents that her family had nowhere to live and asked to stay for a few weeks while they found a rental property. Lucy and Peter wanted to help and agreed to this short-term arrangement. However, once they'd moved in it became clear that Mary and her adult children were making no attempts to find alternative accommodation.

Over 12 months, the situation worsened for Lucy and Peter. Mary's belongings took over the house, she made no financial contributions and appeared to have no plan to leave. Mary was increasingly verbally abusive to Lucy and Peter, making their home a stressful place to be.

Considerations

In 2020, Lucy and Peter sought advice from Senior Rights Victoria (SRV) about the situation. After this discussion, Mary was informed that she had no right to reside with Lucy and Peter, and that she and her children should vacate. This inflamed Mary, who hurled abuse at Lucy and Peter. They telephoned SRV, who contacted detectives from the local Family Violence Investigation Unit. A Family Violence Safety Notices (FVSN) was served on Mary and her children. FVSNs can be issued on the spot to protect people. Like Family Violence Intervention orders, FVSNs have conditions. In line with these conditions, Mary and her children were removed from the premises and provided with local emergency accommodation.

Lucy and Peter had initially been reluctant to involve police. However, trusting the advice and support of Seniors Rights Victoria, empowered them to act. The partnership between Seniors Rights Victoria and Victoria Police, meant that Lucy and Peter were willing to involve the police.

Lucy and Peter can now live in their own home safe and free from violence.

SRV has a free helpline. People can call the helpline to talk to one of our experienced advocates who can help them understand if an issue is elder abuse and to provide some options about how to resolve the situation. In many cases, SRV can link callers with appropriate advice and/or referrals. Where an older person needs more assistance than is available on the Helpline, legal and/or social work advice or casework may be available.