

Department probes claims of elder abuse

The Department of Social Development in the Western Cape has launched an investigation into allegations of elder abuse at the unregistered Serendipity Old Age Home.



(Image: Wikimedia Commons)

Residents allege that the elderly at the home are neglected, drugged to keep them quiet and fed food past the expiry date.

The department said it acts immediately on information received regarding an unregistered facility, with the aim of moving it towards compliance.

"A specialist investigator from our NGO partner, Action on Elder Abuse South Africa (AEASA), which works with and is funded by the department, has been enlisted to thoroughly investigate the Serendipity Old Age Home.

"The department has a zero tolerance approach towards the abuse and ill-treatment of senior citizens. If any criminal conduct is uncovered through our investigations, the matter will be referred to the South African Police Service for further investigation and prosecution," the department said.

To further protect older persons, the MEC for Social Development, Albert Fritz, is investigating the possibility of establishing a dedicated inspectorate within the department. It would be tasked with identifying unregistered facilities throughout the province and assessing all human rights matters and operational norms and standards at all residential facilities.

The inspectorate would report directly to Fritz.

The department has asked the public to check the department's website for a list of registered residential facilities throughout the province. The website also includes additional information on service centres which provide key services for

older persons.

Alternatively, people can check whether a residential facility is registered by contacting their nearest regional office or the department's hotline 0800 220 250.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>