

Case 1:

Mrs. Scott

The following case is not a true story, but is based on situations that people often hear about when they are working with senior abuse cases.

Mrs. Scott (75 years old) lives in rural Nova Scotia. Her oldest daughter, Joyce (54 years old), moved back home five years ago, after Mrs. Scott's husband died. Over the past year, Joyce lost her job and started drinking more than usual. Mrs. Scott is very worried about her daughter. She depends on her to go to the grocery store, her doctor's appointments, and card night at the local recreation centre.

When Joyce's car broke down and couldn't be repaired, she asked her mother to co-sign a loan for her new car. Joyce convinced her mother that it was the only way she could get a car. And without a car, Joyce wouldn't be able to continue to help her with her errands. Joyce also convinced Mrs. Scott to apply for credit cards to help her through this rough time without work. Mrs. Scott pays the credit card bills, but it is becoming a financial burden on her to continue to pay her daughter's debts.

Mrs. Scott doesn't want Joyce to be angry with her or to stop helping her, so she feels like she has to continue to support Joyce through this difficult time.

**Before you act,
ask yourself:**

What are the safety issues?
Am I being respectful?



1. SEE it!

*Do you see possible signs of abuse?
If so, what are the signs?*

What might be happening?

- Financial abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Violation of rights
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Physical abuse

*Would you hesitate to name it? If so, why?
What would help you overcome your hesitation?*

2. CHECK it!

How could you check this situation? What might you ask? Who might you ask? What other help is available?

Case 2:

Mr. McInnis

The following case is not a true story, but is based on situations that people often hear about when they are working with senior abuse cases.

Mr. McInnis (79 years old) has been living in a nursing home for the past five years. He was a coal miner until the mine closed. He has emphysema and needs oxygen on a regular basis. His daughter Joan (59 years old) visits him weekly.

This week, Mr. McInnis told his daughter that Sally (24 years old), the night staff person, is very mean to him. He said that Sally yells at him if he asks for help to get to the washroom at night. Mr. McInnis told his daughter he is afraid to go to the washroom alone because he has to take the oxygen tank with him. He doesn't feel stable enough to get himself and the oxygen tank to the washroom without a fall.

Joan asked him if he has talked to the supervisor about Sally. He said he hasn't because he knows Sally is a single mother and needs this job to support her two small children. He said that he and Sally used to be very friendly, but that things have changed over the past few months. He's afraid if he says something that Sally might lose her job or, even worse, that things might get worse instead of better for him. He also told Joan that he is now having trouble sleeping. Joan is worried and not sure what to do.

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Case 3:

John

The following case is not a true story, but is based on situations that people often hear about when they are working with senior abuse cases.

After experiencing a number of health problems, John (83 years old) has recently moved in with his son Pete and daughter-in-law Emily in an up-and-coming subdivision just outside of Halifax. In recent months, John has experienced a number of health concerns, including some falls and frequent problems remembering things. Doctors think John may be showing signs of dementia.

Lately, John has noticed that he has not been receiving his mail as he did when he lived by himself. John asked Pete if he has noticed anything about the missing mail. Pete assures John that when the mail is delivered to the mailbox at the end of their road, he makes sure to collect and open all of John's mail to ensure it is handled promptly. This makes John uneasy. He feels he is completely capable of dealing with his own mail and does not feel that Pete needs to do it for him. However, since he has recently moved in with Pete and is relying on Pete to help him with some of his day-to-day tasks, John is fearful of confronting his son and hurting his new living arrangement.

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Case 4:

Jane

The following case is not a true story, but is based on situations that people often hear about when they are working with senior abuse cases.

Jane (72 years old) is a widow who is still very active in her community. She often takes part in social dinners and cards with the local seniors' group. Since her husband died, Billy (69 years old) has given her a lot of attention. He often asks her to travel to the events with him and sit with him. Jane misses the companionship of a man and would like to start dating again, but feels Billy is coming on too strong.

At the last dinner dance, Billy grabbed Jane's bottom and made a lewd comment. Jane was shocked and told him to leave her alone. Sandy (76 years old), Jane's friend, was standing right beside her when Billy grabbed her bottom. Sandy told Jane she was overreacting and that Billy didn't mean any harm. He was just having a good time. Jane left the event. She now feels embarrassed and doesn't want to attend any more events if Sandy or Billy will be there.

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Case 5:

Mr. Russell

The following case is not a true story, but is based on situations that people often hear about when they are working with senior abuse cases.

Mr. Russell (92 years old) lives with his friend Ted (72 years old) in a small, run-down house in Porter's Lake. They rarely leave the house and are fairly isolated. They don't have many close friends or neighbours nearby. Their 12 stray cats keep them company. Ted feeds the cats regularly and allows them to roam freely throughout the home.

The house is cluttered. The kitchen counters are covered with dirty dishes and unfinished food. The sink is always filled with dirty dishes.

Mr. Russell used to get regular visits from nurses who work for a local care provider. Recently however, the agency has refused to continue sending nurses to the property because they have deemed it unsanitary and unsafe for their nurses. The agency has contacted Public Health with their concerns.

Ted has made some attempts to clean up the house by purchasing two litter boxes, but they are rarely cleaned and often over full.

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Case 6:

Margaret

The following case is not a true story, but is based on situations that people often hear about when they are working with senior abuse cases.

Margaret (68 years old) is a very active member of her community and participates in many groups and clubs. She has lots of friends and close neighbours. Her husband, Bob (68 years old), has been retired for three years, and was a well respected member of the business community throughout his career.

Since his retirement, Bob has had difficulty finding things to keep him busy. He can often be found at the Legion or golf club having a few drinks with friends. He regularly comes home drunk, starts a fight and hits Margaret for no reason. He always apologizes the next day and tells her that he loves her. He says if it weren't for her mistakes, he wouldn't have hit her.

Margaret has not disclosed this to anyone close to her. But last week at cards, her bridge partner, Pat, noticed a bruise on her wrist and asked Margaret what happened. Margaret said she was clumsy and banged her arm on the door. Pat is not sure she believes Margaret, but doesn't want to push for more information.

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