

## **Attachment C**

### **Case Examples**

1. A 38 year old female with chronic mental illness and a history of placements in various facilities and her 43 year old brother who has severe mental retardation live with their 73 year old father. Their mother is deceased. You are assigned to provide supports to the brother. On your first visit to the home you notice the following: The home is very cluttered and does not appear to have been cleaned in a while. There are dirty dishes piled in the sink, dried liquids spilled on the floor, etc. There are signs of roaches everywhere. There are piles of unopened mail everywhere. There is little food in the house, but lots of fast food bags in the trash. After you've been working in the home a few days, you notice the following: The sister's behavior is strange. She mumbles to herself all the time. She sometimes walks around the house with very little clothing on. She seldom eats. She has several full bottles of medication in the bathroom. You also notice the father seems very forgetful. He asks you the same questions over and over and doesn't remember things you tell him. Once in a while, he gets very angry and raises his voice at everyone for no apparent reason. One day you come to work and notice the brother has a bruise on his left cheek just below the eye. When you ask him what happened, he will not tell you.

2. James is a 34 year old. He was injured in an accident and does not have the use of his legs. He uses a wheelchair to get around. You are providing support for James. James lives with his sister, Roxanne. She also works as one of his support workers. When you are on duty, she usually leaves the home. Sometime when she comes back to start her shift, you notice a strong smell of alcohol on her breath. You know there is a lot of liquor in the house. Yesterday, James's disability check came. As you were approaching the house to go on duty, you overheard Roxanne shouting at James, she was calling him a "cripple", saying "you owe me" and threatening that if he did not give her money, she would leave and force him to go into a nursing home. When you knocked on the door, she left out the back. James told you to come in, the door was open. When you came in, you found James lying on the floor, with the wheelchair overturned. When you asked him what happened, he said he bumped into the couch and fell over. When you asked him if Roxanne did this, he said no.

3. You provide supports to an 88 year old woman who has dementia. She is usually not able to communicate, but sometimes has moments when she can. She lives in a very nice home and seems to be "well off" financially. She has a nice car, but she is unable to drive anymore. She has a son who lives across town. You do not see him come to see his mother very often. When he does come, he takes her on "outings". You notice that items (furniture, art work, silverware) are starting to "go missing" from the home. One day, you come to work after the weekend and notice the car is not in the garage. One day in the mail, you see an envelope that has "Final Notice" printed on it. One day after the mother and son have gone on an outing, the bank calls and asks to speak to her. She is unable to communicate well, but after the phone call she is noticeably upset. You try to question her about it but she is unable to communicate clearly.

## **Trainer's notes to Case Examples:**

1. The condition of the home could be sign of neglect. Note that some persons are more comfortable with “clutter” and a “dirty house” than others, and that it's important not to impose your standards on others. However, the dishes and spills, causing pests could be a health issue. The unpaid bills are a sign no one is managing the household and the consumer could be threatened with a utility cut-off, eviction, etc. They could also be a sign of exploitation, if for example, the sister is handling everyone's money. The sister's mental health condition presents a risk factor. Her behavior (and the unused medicine) may indicate she is not taking her medications and her condition is worsening. She may be neglecting herself and/or her behavior may place the brother at risk. The father shows some signs of possible dementia. He also may be neglecting himself or his outbursts may place the brother at risk. The bruise on the brother's face may or may not have been caused by abuse, but as an “unexplained injury” it should be reported. This household really contains three persons, all of whom may need supports and only one of whom is receiving them.
2. Roxanne's apparent drinking while on duty is a risk factor for abuse/neglect (as well as probably a violation of the provider agency's policies). Roxanne's shouting and saying those things to James is verbal and/or emotional abuse. Asking/demanding money and threatening him if he doesn't provide it is extortion. Finding James on the floor with the wheelchair overturned - is his explanation plausible? NOTE: Point out that consumers will often deny abuse. If it was an accident, is Roxanne leaving him on the floor neglect?
3. The disappearing items in and around the home are a warning sign of financial exploitation. The “final notice” is also, especially if the son helps pay the bills or manage his mother's money. The phone call from the bank likewise. NOTE: Point out that if the son were asked about the missing items, he might say “mother told me to take them” or something similar. Given her dementia, is she able to make such decisions. Is she likely to be easily “influenced” by the son?