

Activity – Signs of Abuse case study

- Mrs Smith attended a weekly lunch club. The organisers noticed her becoming depressed, then she stopped coming.
- Mrs Smith has a cleaner each week, Mrs Smith leaves money on the side for her. Several times recently there has been no money left, but the cleaner doesn't like to say anything as she is aware that Mrs Smith is getting a bit forgetful.
- Mrs Smith's neighbour has noticed that, unusually, her grandchildren are visiting regularly; on chatting to Mrs Smith about how happy she must be about this Mrs Smith's starts crying and abruptly ends the conversation.
- Mrs Smith's good friend notices that she is no longer wearing her engagement ring, she would normally always have this on.

Consider each of these scenarios affecting Mrs Smith and determine if any of them may 'flag' abuse.

Signs of Abuse case study feedback

Each of these, in isolation, may be indicative of a general deterioration in Mrs Smith's condition but when grouped together may suggest an abuse that needs further inquiry; but if the lunch club, the cleaner, the friend and the neighbour all say nothing, because alone none of them have anything definitive to report, then the potential abuse can continue.

The message from this is, that no matter how small your concern, and even if it turns out to be nothing to have been worried about, it is still better reported.