

## Adult Protective Services: Collaboration in APS

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### Case Example

Lynn is a frail, 83 year old widow whose only son is deceased. Lynn's only living relatives are an adult grandson, adult granddaughter, and former daughter-in-law. The grandson moved in with Lynn after Lynn's husband's death, but she later asked him to leave because he contributed nothing to the household, was allegedly abusing drugs, and wrecked a car she bought for him. He had also become verbally and physically abusive. The grandson refused to move out.

The first report of the grandson's abusive behavior came to APS from the former daughter-in-law (i.e. the grandson's mother); the second, from the domestic violence specialist referred by APS after the first report. APS confirmed physical and verbal abuse. As a result of the investigation, the APS worker advised Lynn to take out restraining orders on all three of her relatives because of concerns about possible financial abuse. Lynn refused to request a restraining order against the grandson, and a temporary restraining order against the two women (the granddaughter and the former daughter-in-law) was withdrawn after Lynn hired an attorney to defend them. Lynn sought support through her church. Her minister did a home visit. Since Lynn had last attended church, the minister noted that she had lost weight, wasn't eating, and was recovering from pneumonia. He also noted that her arthritis was making it more difficult to ambulate and to complete routine household chores such as shopping, cleaning and cooking. He spoke to the grandson. The visit from her minister triggered another argument with her grandson. After the minister left, the grandson slapped Lynn so forcefully that she fell to the ground. Lynn was taken to the hospital and treated for her injuries. Lynn's former daughter-in-law reported the abuse, and all three women cooperated with the law enforcement investigation. The suspect claimed that his grandmother was demented and had attacked him.

### Discussion questions:

1. What are Lynn's strengths?
2. What are your hypotheses about what might be happening with Lynn? What she might need?
3. Name some of I-Team partners who might become involved in this case, and benefits of involving those partners.
4. What might be some areas of need that I-Team partners might agree on?
5. What can each partner bring to the table?
6. What might be sources of conflict in the ways that various I-Team partners might view this case?