

Adult Protective Services: Risk Assessment in APS

Case Planning Activity

Case Scenario I

An APS worker receives a report about Gavin Parks from a neighbor. Mr. Parks is eighty-four years old, has diabetes, and is legally blind. He lives alone in a house that is cluttered but livable. Mr. Parks is becoming increasingly forgetful and recently started a cooking fire. Although it wasn't serious, the neighbor is worried.

Mr. Parks used to get out and do his own shopping, but fell recently and has been afraid to leave the house ever since. He has a daughter who visits occasionally. The neighbor checks in on Mr. Parks every few days and has bought him groceries a few times. Although the neighbor doesn't mind helping out, she is worried that she can't do everything that needs to be done.

When the APS worker made a home visit, Mr. Parks was friendly and appeared to be oriented. He was willing to accept help but unwilling to move. He told the worker that the phone had been disconnected for nonpayment. He cannot see well enough to pay his bills, but says he will ask the neighbor to write a check and mail it for him. When the worker suggests a daily money manager, Mr. Parks responds that he doesn't want to "be beholden to anyone."

- **What do you suspect-abuse, neglect, or exploitation?**

- **What is at risk?**

- **What is the level of risk (low, medium, or high)?**

Use the 3 S's (Soon, Severe, Sure)

- **What services or supports can be employed to reduce or eliminate the risk(s)?**

Case Scenario 2

An APS worker receives a report from the police department about Denise Fairbanks, a 79 year old woman who they found wandering around her neighborhood at 3:00 am in the morning. A neighbor directed the police officer to the woman's house and said that she lived with her daughter Cathy. The police officer brought Mrs. Fairbanks home. When Cathy answered the door, she was very upset. She thanked the officer and explained that her mother has Alzheimer's and often wandered at night and she had difficulty keeping track of her. She admitted that she occasionally locked her in her room at night to keep her safe. She also admitted that she has once or twice struck Mrs. Fairbanks out of frustration.

The next day, the APS worker made a home visit. Cathy admitted that she had struck her mother on several occasions. She was upset about these incidents but insisted that she didn't want her mother in a nursing home. Cathy said that she had two brothers who lived close by, but never helped out. They believed it was Cathy's responsibility as the daughter to care for their mother.

Cathy is a single mother with two teenage sons. During the visit, Mrs. Fairbanks occasionally interrupted to say that she needed to get home to make dinner for her husband, who had died twelve years earlier.

- **What do you suspect-abuse, neglect, or exploitation?**
- **What is at risk?**
- **What is the level of risk (low, medium, or high)?**
Use the 3 S's (Soon, Severe, Sure)
- **What services or supports can be employed to reduce or eliminate the risk(s)?**

Case Scenario 3

APS received a referral about Evelyn Adams from a neighbor. Mrs. Adams lives with her husband in a small apartment. Over the years, Mrs. Adams has confided to the neighbor that her husband has been physically abusive. Since Mrs. Adam's husband retired, he appears to become more abusive.

Recently, the neighbor heard Mrs. Adam's husband shouting at her and threatening to kill her. The neighbor made an APS report.

When an APS worker went to the home and spoke to Mrs. Adam's she admitted that her husband was abusive but said that she had learned to live with the situation and wished the neighbor would mind her own business.

- **What do you suspect-abuse, neglect, or exploitation?**

- **What is at risk?**

- **What is the level of risk (low, medium, or high)?**
Use the 3 S's (Soon, Severe, Sure)

- **What services or supports can be employed to reduce or eliminate the risk(s)?**