

Case study - read the scenario and pause when prompted to discuss how to respond.

You notice that one of the women who attends your church hasn't been in for a while. You decide to make a home visit.

On arriving at the house she lives in with her son, the son answers the door. The son says that his mother doesn't want visitors at the moment as she is resting.

You ask the son to pass on your best wishes and leave saying that you will call again next week. On the second occasion the son again says that she cannot see you. This time you say that you will only stay for a few minutes but want to check that she is OK

You go into the living room and see that the woman looks worried. You can also tell that she has lost weight and looks ill. She usually wears make up and her hair is always immaculate. Looking around the room you can see that the house is in a bit of state and in one of the doors there is a hole.

Pause here and think how you would react at this point?

You find an opportunity to ask her what is wrong and she initially says nothing – just a bit run down. She keeps looking at the door and is behaving in a way that is not usual for her. She says that you haven't seen her for a while and she says that she hasn't been able to get out. You continue to probe and ask why. She says that her son worries about her going out in case something happens to her.

You ask whether she has been eating properly and she simply nods her head.

You ask whether she has seen her GP. She answers No.

Pause here and think how you would react at this point?

You find a way to say that you are worried about her ask her what her son is doing to help her

The son is still not around and she says – I can't expect him to care for me. He has his own life to live. You say that you are worried that she hasn't been out of the house for a long time and that she doesn't look well. Looking around you ask whether she needs help and she says nothing. You ask what happened to the door and you can see tears in her eyes. She rolls up her sleeve and you can see a large bruise on her arm. You ask how that happened and she just looks to the door.

Questions:

What types of abuse have you seen?

What are the risks?

If you hadn't seen the bruise would you still be concerned?

What can you do?

Who should you tell?

What could happen if you do nothing?

What about consent?