

Here are some points that you need to consider. You should have included all of these in your reflective activity.

- You have now made the right decision to contact the care manager. However, by accepting Jenny's request you have potentially put yourself in a compromising situation. Depending upon the security settings that Jenny has on her account, your details (and posts) may now be shared with a lot of people that you would not wish to see them.
- There may also be questions about your understanding of professional boundaries. Although Jenny is no longer in your direct care and support, you and your organisation may still have statutory responsibilities towards her. By forming this relationship with Jenny, you could place yourself in a conflict of interest. For example, what would happen if she disclosed something to you as a friend and asked you to keep it confidential but you felt you should pass on to a worker?
- As a social service worker it is also important that you are able to end professional relationships with people who have received a service from you when it is appropriate, and in a way that enables that relationship to be re-established if required. Beginning a social relationship with Jenny means that you are likely to find it very difficult to have a professional relationship with her in the future. For example, if you joined the care management team, Jenny may not be able to understand that you are a worker rather than a friend.
- By beginning a social relationship with Jenny, you could actually undermine the working relationship that she has with other workers. Jenny may look to you for support rather than these workers because you are more familiar. Also, there might be situations where Jenny is unhappy with decisions or actions taken by her workers. You may not be aware of all the circumstances so would not be able to be consistent with your support for her.
- Another factor to consider is that by accepting Jenny's request, you are placing yourself at risk of breaching the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers. The Code states that "you must not form inappropriate relationships with service users", so you could find yourself subject to an investigation regarding your relationship with Jenny.

When you received the initial friends request from Jenny, the right thing to do was to not to respond to it and to contact her care manager right away.