

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

- You are now doing the right thing by speaking to your line manager and being honest about what happened. Earlier, you went some way towards doing the right thing when you told Tom that the joke made you uncomfortable. You probably realise you made a mistake when you did not report what happened sooner.
- Your line manager needs to know what happened so that she can record it. There might have been other incidents like this. Telling her means that she can take action to address Tom's behaviour and to improve awareness of equality and respect at work.
- In future you should take more direct action to deal with situations like this. A climate of respect in a care setting begins with the staff. When staff tell racist jokes it sends a message to residents that this is acceptable and may lead to further racist comments or jokes. This is what has happened here.
- You know that jokes can cause harm to those they are directed at, or who overhear them, even if the person telling the joke claims no offense was meant.
- You should learn more about the standards expected of social service workers and about the law on equality. The SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers says that social service workers are expected to promote equal opportunities for people who use services and carers. You are expected to respect diversity and different cultures.
- The Equality Act (2010) is the law that protects people from unwanted behaviour that is directed at them because of their race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age and so on. This law covers all workplaces. Challenging and reporting racist comments helps to uphold this law.
- Although you are now doing the right thing, you should do some further learning to make sure that you meet the standards expected of a social services worker. You should learn how to deal with and challenge discrimination. You should understand the legal and work setting requirements on equality, diversity, discrimination and rights. Your line manager can help with this.

When you heard Tom telling the racist joke the right thing to do was to find an opportunity to tell him that it was inappropriate. You should then have told your line manager what happened.