

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

- You have made a mistake. As a manager to whom the initial concerns were reported, you need to take responsibility for the situation. The correct action to take now is to immediately begin your own investigation and report this to the Care Inspectorate. You should co-operate fully with the Adult Support and Protection process.
- When the district nurse first reported concerns, you should have visited Isobel to find out what was happening. You needed to speak to her and look at her records to find out the reasons behind her refusal of personal care and how strongly she felt about this.
- Speaking to Isobel is a way of respecting her rights and choices, while also taking action to protect her from harm. Deep bed sores could result in a serious infection. You must never put other people at unnecessary risk.
- As a social service worker, you must protect and promote the rights and interests of people who use service and carers. You should treat each person as an individual. You should respect and, where appropriate, promote the views and wishes of people who use services and carers.
- You must ensure you understand what it means to support the rights of people to make informed choices about the services they use. You should respect and maintain the dignity and privacy of people who use services.
- You need to be open and honest with your employer, people who use services and carers when care has, or may have caused, physical or emotional harm.
- You must recognise and use responsibly the power and authority you have when working with people who use services and carers.
- You need to ensure that you meet relevant standards of practice and work in a lawful, safe and effective way. You should maintain clear, accurate and up-to-date records in line with procedures relating to your work.
- It is important to recognise and respect the roles and expertise of workers from other professions and work in partnership with them. You remain responsible for work that you have delegated to others.
- You should listen to feedback from people who use services, carers and other relevant people and consider that feedback to improve your practice.
- You need to learn the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers. Make sure that you fully understand and follow these at all times.
- Not taking the correct action in this situation could call into question your suitability to be a social services worker. Failure to take the right action has placed Isobel at risk of harm.

When the district nurse told you that Isobel's skin was deteriorating and that it was clear Isobel was not receiving personal care, the correct action would have been to visit Isobel to find out what is happening, carrying out your own investigation. This would involve looking at the case records, speaking to Isobel, your staff and her carers.