

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. The correct action to take now is to investigate why Isobel does not want personal care. You should visit her to find out why she has not been accepting personal care over the last two weeks and see if she needs medical assistance.
- When the district nurse first reported concerns, you should have visited Isobel to find out what was happening. You needed to speak to Isobel and look at her records to find out the reasons behind her refusal of personal care and how strongly she felt about this. Bed sores can quickly become infected. Waiting several weeks to act is too long and places Isobel at unnecessary risk.
- You and your staff have incorrectly applied the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers. You need to learn how to follow these Codes correctly. Speaking to Isobel as soon as concerns were raised would have been a way of respecting her rights and choices, while also taking action to protect her from harm.
- 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.
- 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.