

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. You need to speak to Isobel and her daughter to get more information. You should also speak to the worker and review the care plan, then investigate further if required. Speaking to Isobel would show that you are respecting her rights and choices, while also taking action to protect her from harm.
- When the district nurse first reported concerns, you should have immediately arranged to visit Isobel to find out what was happening. You needed to find out the reasons behind her refusal of personal care and how strongly she felt about this. Bed sores can quickly become infected. Delaying action placed Isobel 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.
- 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 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.
- You need to learn the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers. Make sure that you fully understand these Codes and follow them at all times.
- 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 at this point could call into question your suitability to be a social services worker. Failure to take the right action up to now 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.