

Case study: Joan

Themes cover: adult social care, assessment, care and support and safeguarding.

Joan is in her late seventies, lives in a first floor flat in a multi-occupancy building owned by a registered social landlord. She lives alone and is estranged from her only daughter. She has no other family. Joan has diabetes, is in poor health, has arthritis and a heart condition which means that she has limited mobility.

She rarely leaves her home, but a neighbour brings shopping and the local shop sometimes makes deliveries. Neighbours and GP have reported that Joan's flat is in poor condition with discarded rotting food, packaging and dust covering the floor and furniture. Each room is piled high with clothes, newspapers and accumulated household debris. She has two cats who soil the floor and furniture.

Joan also neglects her personal care. She spends much of her time in one room, rarely washing or changing her clothes. She is a heavy drinker and smoker. Joan spends most of her days and nights in an armchair which is surrounded by accumulated papers and debris and on occasion, has fallen asleep with a cigarette still alight.

She is often soaked with urine from her incontinence when drinking. She has had a few falls and sustained fractures which has resulted in hospital admissions but once discharged, refuses follow up care and support.

Her neighbour has become increasingly concerned that Joan is not eating - her shopping requests are less frequent, and she appears to be losing weight. Meals that the neighbour provides are often left untouched. The GP has reviewed Joan's health and medication and remains concerned about how she is living and referred her to adult social care.

A social worker has attempted initial contact with Joan, but although she is happy to talk on the doorstep, she does not offer access to her flat and politely declines any help and support.

Questions

1. Which legislation could be used to engage with Joan?
2. How will the new Coronavirus (COVID-19) changes to the Care Act 2014 affect your intervention and assessment?
3. What measures to help and support an intervention can be used if Joan:
 - a. Has capacity
 - b. Lacks capacity
4. What intervention methods could be used if Joan's self-neglect is associated with a mental disorder?
5. What powers can be used to address squalor and infestation within domestic premises?
6. What powers can be used to address self-neglectful behaviour that constitute severe nuisance and annoyance to others?

7. What powers can be used for neglect of animals?

8. What else could be considered if Joan continues to self-neglect?

Relevant legislation:

- 1983 The Mental Health Act (MHA)
- 1991 Care Programme Approach (CPA)
- 1998 The Human Rights Act (HRA)
- 2005 The Mental Capacity Act (MCA)
- 2006 National Health Service Act (NHSA)
- 2008 CPA - new guidelines
- 2009 Deprivation of Liberties Safeguards (DOLS)
- 2010 Equality Act
- 2014 The Care Act (CA)
- 2019 Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act
- 2020 Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)
- 2020 Coronavirus (COVID-19): changes to the Care Act 2014
- 2020 Care Act easements: guidance for local authorities