

# Worksheet 10:

## Why do carers care?

### Two case studies

**Group 1, please read Case Study 1: Paul**

**Group 2, please read Case Study 2: Mrs. Snow**

Both groups, please answer the questions and be prepared to discuss your responses.

#### Case Study 1: Paul

Paul has Alzheimer's disease and lives alone. He has recently started receiving a package of care provided by his local authority. His friend, Trudy, visits him daily, and although she initially had a good relationship with the care professionals, she is becoming increasingly concerned by the level of care that Paul seems to be receiving.

On one visit Trudy notices that Paul has been incontinent. He is sitting in an armchair which they both know he never normally sits in. Two community support workers are present. When Paul sees Trudy he begins to cry. His trousers are sodden with urine, and Trudy notices that his incontinence pad is around his ankles. His socks and slippers are sodden too.

Trudy and Paul have been good friends and neighbours for twenty-five years. Paul is divorced from his wife and Trudy's husband died six years ago. There has never been a romantic attachment between them but they care for each other deeply. Paul's diagnosis came as a huge shock to them both.

As Paul's condition worsened and his needs increased, Trudy decided to cut her work hours so that she could provide more care and support for Paul.

Trudy says that the decision to involve care professionals in Paul's life was very hard for her as Paul had always indicated that he would not wish to be cared for in this way. Trudy reassured herself that the level of care which would be provided by the care professionals would be far better than she could provide herself. Sadly, Trudy feels that this is not the case.

She tries to help Paul out of his chair in order to assist him to his bedroom and help him change his clothes. The two staff approach and tell Trudy that they will do that – she can go home.

**Why do you think this situation has happened?**

**What impact does the attitude of the care professionals towards Trudy and Trudy's attitude towards them have on their relationship?**

**What role could Trudy have in the care and support of Paul?**

**What would be the value of developing a professional working relationship with Trudy to EVERYONE involved?**

### Case Study 2: Mrs. Snow

One of the care home team, Jill, has taken the time to give Mrs. Snow a manicure and paint her nails a deep red, which Mrs. Snow seems to have thoroughly enjoyed. When her husband, Mr. Snow comes to visit later that day, he becomes very upset and says that his wife would NEVER have had her nails done in that shocking colour.

Jill is very upset about this and says that she feels she can never do anything right for Mr. Snow – “*all he does is moan at us!!!!*”

Mr. and Mrs. Snow have been married for fifty-six years and had never spent a night apart prior to Mrs. Snow moving into the care home. Mr. and Mrs. Snow are a very religious couple and described themselves as being quite ‘old fashioned’. Mr. Snow cared for his wife at home for seven years, declining most offers of help. When Mrs. Snow moved into the care home, Mr. Snow confided in the home manager that he felt he had let his wife down. He said that he felt terribly guilty that he needed to ‘send her away’ and will never forgive himself for this.

Mr. Snow is frequently critical of the care provided for his wife, and many staff members actively avoid him when he visits.

**Why do you think this situation has happened?**

**What impact does the attitude of the care professionals towards Mr. Snow and Mr. Snow’s attitude towards them have on their relationship?**

**What role could Mr. Snow have in the care and support of his wife?**

**What would be the value of developing a professional working relationship with Mr. Snow to EVERYONE involved?**