

Worksheet 15:

The least restrictive options for care and support

Part 1

Lucy is eighty-four years old. She lives alone in a one bedroom flat in a large town. She has lots of friends and neighbours, and her granddaughter, Sophie is her main carer. Sophie is forty years old and lives with her partner and two children in a three bedroom house not far from Lucy.

Lucy was diagnosed with Lewy Body dementia four years ago. To begin with Sophie would pop in and see Lucy every other day, do her shopping for her, check that she was ok, help with laundry and household tasks and take Lucy to bingo every Thursday and Church every Sunday. Sophie works full time as a Teaching Assistant, but she was able to support Lucy without too much difficulty.

As the years have passed, Lucy has had increased difficulty in managing her daily living activities. She forgets to eat and drink sometimes and forgets to take her medication. Sophie has had to spend more and more time with Lucy; helping her with a bath or shower, cooking her meals and staying with her whilst she eats them. She has liaised with the GP for help and advice about Lucy's medication, and to express her concern that Lucy seems to be really unsteady on her feet and has had a couple of falls in her flat and one at Church.

Sophie is not able to sustain this level of support for Lucy and feels that help is needed.

In order of least restriction, list the options that might be available to Lucy and Sophie.

Part 2

Time passes. Lucy is experiencing very vivid visual hallucinations and has stopped going into her bedroom as she believes it is full of strange people who are drinking her tea and eating her food. Lucy has stopped changing her clothes, and will very occasionally let Sophie help her. Lucy is losing weight as she is very distracted when Sophie stays to help her have a meal, and frequently walks away and starts doing something else. Sophie is feeling very guilty because she has to leave Lucy to go to work and look after her own family. She is not sleeping well.

It appears that Lucy is not sleeping well either. One of her neighbours spoke to Sophie after her last visit to say that she often hears Lucy shouting in her flat, and Lucy been known to bang on the neighbours' doors to ask if she can stay with them because of the 'long faced men' in her flat.

In order of least restriction, list the options that might be available to Lucy and Sophie.

Part 3

It is 2.45 in the morning when Sophie receives a call from Lucy's neighbour. Lucy has been found lying in the road outside her flat and an ambulance is on its way. Sophie arrives at Lucy's flat as the paramedics are examining her. Lucy is very distressed, but she is reassured by Sophie's presence. The paramedic thinks that Lucy has broken her hip and says that she needs to go to hospital. Lucy is trying to get out of the ambulance saying that she is fine and needs to go home. Lucy is not able to recall her home address or how she came to be in the road.

The paramedics and Sophie agree that it would be in Lucy's best interests to go to hospital. Lucy is given morphine which helps to soothe her.

Lucy's broken hip is fixed in surgery. She remains on an orthopaedic ward where her condition deteriorates. Lucy seems comfortable but now requires the assistance of one or two staff to help in all her daily activities. She needs to be fed and, as she has not been able to fully engage with therapy due to her cognitive impairment, she now needs to be hoisted. Lucy continues to hallucinate but does not seem at all disturbed by this.

Sophie is told by the ward doctor that Lucy is now medically fit for discharge, and that Lucy must decide what will happen next.

In order of least restriction, list the options that might be available to Lucy and Sophie.