

## Webinar Vignettes

### The Referral

*APS receives an anonymous referral regarding a tall black male appearing to be in his late 60's or early 70's that has been seen walking the neighborhood and going into other residents' backyards. He is described as being aggressive when spoken to, having significant body odor, and stumbling when he walks, as if he was intoxicated.*

*It's reported, he always returns to the same house, but no one seems to come in or out except for him on a consistent basis. The outside area of the home appears dirty, the grass hasn't been cut, and the mailbox is overfull with mail. There is no information about services or support.*

**You are assigned this case. What are your first thoughts of approach?**

### Meet Mr. G

*Mr. G is an 86 year old black male who migrated from a small island in the West Indies to the United States in the late 1960's. He was a police officer in his native country and valued being of service. Mr G's access to education was limited but his ability to absorb information was extraordinary. He faced a lot of adversity in his lifetime, the biggest one being that the color of his skin deterred him from opportunities. More so than being from a foreign country. His determination to overcome that obstacle motivated him.*

*Mr. G was able to move his wife and son to the U.S. He was able to purchase a home in the late 1970's. Working as a state employee for many years, Mr. G retired to take care of his ill wife and became her primary caregiver. His passion in retirement was gardening, bringing his ideologies of cultivating the land. He would grow many herbs and brew natural remedies for pain, colds, stress. His philosophy was "why do you think they call it a medical practice, because they have yet to get it right, so they practice on you".*

*He was meticulous, a man of routine and guarded his ability to be independent like a fortress. Never accepting help or asking for it from anyone. He believed that you become stronger when you figure things out on your own.*

*About 15 years ago Mr. G started to show signs of memory loss. He started to forget his way home, forgot to pay his expenses and misplacing money. His son managed to convince him to see a neurologist who confirmed he had dementia. Mr. G allowed his son to assist with maintaining his finances but only if he wouldn't disclose his diagnosis to anyone, not even his wife.*

*His son kept Mr G's secret all the way until his unfortunate passing in 2014. Impacted by the grief and loss of his son, Mr G started to deteriorate quickly. He began leaving his home at odd hours of the night, forgetting if he ate or if he showered. He neglected his wife's need for assistance. He got into disputes with other family members and began isolating himself from those he loved. He even lost the ability to take care of his garden.*

*A couple, who moved into the neighborhood recently, noticed Mr. G and his activities/behaviors. Concerned for their family's safety and possible retaliation, they anonymously reported Mr. G to APS.*

**Think about having this additional information, has your approach stayed the same or has it changed?**

### **APS Investigates**

*APS went to investigate the referral they received. As a procedure, if indicated that the person may be aggressive, it is common to go with law enforcement or with additional workers to ensure the safety of everyone. Mr. G was immediately defensive, and angry when he saw law enforcement and APS at his front door. He demanded the APS worker leave his property saying he didn't need help.*

*The assigned worker saw Mr. G's wife who appeared anxious during the encounter. While Mr. G was yelling, the APS worker also took note of the condition of the home and noticed a picture of a Caribbean Island and underneath it said, "Love and Pride". The worker apologized to Mr. G for upsetting him by coming unannounced and asked him if he would mind answering something. Mr. G's agreed. He asked if Mr. G was from the Caribbean. Mr. G answered that he was.*

*The APS worker then engaged Mr. G by discussing the Caribbean and the beauty of the islands. The worker was eventually invited into the home and asked Mr. G if it was okay if the police and other workers could come in as well, Mr. G said yes and stated, "I was a police officer in my country". He spoke about his values of being of service and his pride in family including names. Mr. G's wife felt more at ease to provide context explaining their son passed away and that distant family friends stopped coming around because of Mr. G's temper at times.*

*The workers assessed that Mr. G's temperament shifted recently; his wife described him as a "gentle giant". The police officers asked her if she was afraid of him. She replied, "No, I am not afraid of him, I am afraid for him. He is not himself".*

*Their deceased son had a daughter who would call and check on them periodically, she was in college. Mr. G's wife gave the APS worker permission to reach out to her to discuss what was going on. The worker called the granddaughter in front of Mr. G and his wife. The worker explained to the granddaughter APS received a referral.*

*The granddaughter was able to rule out any issues with alcohol or drugs that was stated in the referral. She further explained that she knows that they both take medication but wasn't sure what for. She explained she hasn't seen them in a long time because she was finishing school and they always say everything is fine when they speak on the phone.*

*Following the visit, the APS worker was able to implement services, including the client and their granddaughter every step of the way. The APS worker learned more about Mr. G on his visit - what he liked, how he was in his younger days, as well as the implications of dementia. The worker focused on making sure that service delivery aligned with Mr. G's values.*