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Canadian research network for  
care in the community



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Réseau canadien de recherche pour  
les soins dans la communauté

Leading knowledge exchange on home and community care

# *Debunking Myths!*

## **Sexuality and Aging**

Scenarios for Group Workshop  
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# Working Through Case Scenarios

## Take-away messages:

- Everyone is a link in supporting sexual health and intimacy in care facilities.
- Everyone is a link in the broader continuum of sexual health and intimacy care.

## Goal:

By the end of these scenarios, you will have a better understanding of yours and other's responsibilities in the continuum of care



# Scenarios

The 5 different composite cases are developed from CRNCC/OCSA Keep on Rockin': Sexuality and Aging symposium, CRNCC In Focus: Diversity and Sexual Orientation, research literature and personal communications with service providers.

All the scenarios share the following:

- The question of competing interests among providers, client and family/caregivers
- Values conflict - i.e. what behaviours/activities are deemed appropriate or acceptable
- Cognitive capacity to consider



# Questions

- ✓ **What is the behaviour?**
- ✓ **Assessment of risk?**
- ✓ **What are some appropriate responses?**
- ✓ **What not to do?**



# Scenario 1: Client-Provider Relationship in Long-Term Care Facilities

- John (M, 76, Married)
  - Requires assistance with ADL
  - Living at the nursing home for the last 3 years; wife still visits regularly
  - Developed a relationship with Mary, his PSW
  - Neither Mary nor John informed management of the relationship
  - Mary continued to be John's PSW during their relationship
  - The relationship between the PSW and John broke down two months ago at which point John informed his wife
  - John and his wife are now suing the service provider for sexual abuse



# Scenario 2: STIs and Long-Term Care Facilities

- Stavros (M, 79, Greek Orthodox, Widowed)
  - Has mild dementia, requires med reminders, minimal assistance with ADL
  - Daughter Olympia is care proxy; visits her father regularly
  - PSW discovered that Stavros is suffering from an infection of his genitalia after he reported pain
  - Nursing staff arranged for a medical checkup and found that Stavros had gonorrhea
  - The doctor asked if Stavros had any sexual relationships. He denied having any, though he said he was spending some time with another resident, Delia.
  - The doctor remembered that one week earlier, he had also diagnosed Delia for a throat infection. He determined that Stavros and Delia had been having a sexual relationship for the past month. Delia had been performing oral sex with Stavros.
  - Olympia is now demanding the nursing home to keep Delia and any other women living in the home from socializing and visiting her father.



## Scenario 3: YUCK! Not in My Job Description

- Lydia (F, 80, Widowed)
  - Requires some assistance with ADL
  - Son James is care proxy, but he lives far away and only visits twice a year
  - One day, Lydia asked one of the PSW she gets along with to help her clean her sex toys. Up till now she able to do it herself but her physical condition no longer allows her to do so.
  - The PSW was really upset about Lydia's request, found the idea of cleaning something as private as sex toys 'disgusting' and refused flat out. She went on to gossip with everyone about what Lydia was doing privately in her own room.
  - Lydia thought her request was reasonable, and that her privacy and trust was violated by the PSW. However she decided not to say anything more for fear of retribution and to keep the gossip from getting worse.
  - When James visited his mom, he noticed that she is somewhat different than before: withdrawn and no longer engages in social activities. After probing and learning of the episode, he decided to complain to the manager of the home and demanded an explanation.



# Scenario 4: Romance v Gold-digging

- Marguerite (F, 84, Wealthy, Widowed)
  - Suffering from progressive memory loss; decreased mobility from fractured hip; requires some assistance with ADL. She is still capable of making general day-to-day decisions and looking after her own finances.
  - Daughter Danielle is the care proxy and she visits her mother irregularly
  - Marguerite participates in an Adult Day Program and met Mathieu – who is also in his 80s and lives at the home. The two enjoy each others' company and begin a relationship. Staff at the home is aware of the relationship and sex between the two and have no concerns about Marguerite's capacity to consent. Mathieu's family is equally supportive of the relationship.
  - When Marguerite informed Danielle of her relationship with Mathieu, she was quite upset and angry. Danielle felt that Mathieu was taking advantage of her mother and only trying to seduce his mother to get her money. She demanded that staff intervene and stop the relationship. She threatened to go to the press and retained a lawyer. She started visiting daily, recording all of the activities and conversations concerning her mother and Mathieu that occurred while she was there.
  - In response, Mathieu decided it best to stop coming to visit- "just until things 'settle down to normal 'again.'" Marguerite became very upset, refusing to leave her room, or to go to the day program. She told her PSW, that she no longer wants Danielle to visit with her, because she shouts at her, and treats her like a child.



## Scenario 5: The “Dirty Old Man”?

- Jerry (M, 78, Widower)
  - Moderate dementia and requires assistance with bathing, otherwise independent with ADL
  - Daughter Nathalie is care proxy, and visits monthly.
  - Jerry tends to be private and keeps to himself, but on occasion he would make flirty or lewd remarks to female residents at the home. The episodes are infrequent enough that they are dismissed by both residents and staff, who would just ignore Jerry or otherwise just call him the “dirty old man” of the home behind his back.
  - Lately PSWs noticed Jerry would start masturbating and muttering expletives while he is receiving a bath. The PSWs are quite upset by this and they are refusing to assist Jerry in his personal care. Some are even threatening to quit over the issue.

