



Older Adult Training Scenario - Di

Di is an eighty-year-old woman who lives in a residential aged care facility with her husband, Anthony. Anthony has cancer. Recently, Anthony's condition has worsened. This experience is challenging for Di.

Domain 1 – Symptom severity and distress

Nursing staff have observed that Di is withdrawn and only leaves her room to inquire about her husband's condition or report to the nurses, which is out of character for her. Di is also tearful and reports difficulty sleeping (waking up frequently and ongoing restlessness).

Domain 2 – Harm

Di mentions that she sometimes thinks of dying so she won't have to watch her husband suffer, but then says, of course, I would never do anything like that'. The Nurse talks with Di and determines that Di's thoughts of suicide are vague and imprecise, with no concrete plan to harm herself.

Domain 3 – Functioning

Di is ordinarily friendly, social, and enthusiastic in facility activities (e.g., music, bingo, and exercise programs). Di has withdrawn from all facility activities and most interactions, other than sitting with Anthony. However, she is maintaining her self-care. Di has even been observed snapping at nursing staff and other residents regularly, which is unlike her.

Domain 4 – Co-existing conditions

Di had a stroke 12 months ago and has permanent weakness in her left arm and left leg. Di's balance and coordination are impaired, and Di has some difficulty with mobility. Di uses a walking frame over short distances and uses a wheelchair over longer distances. Di treasures her independence and works with the nursing team to keep fit and healthy. Di reports the changes in mobility and independence "don't bother" her too much as she is still able to get around and is more focused on Anthony.

Domain 5 – Service use and response history

Di accessed a counsellor following the death of her grandson. Her grandson was six when he passed away from a glioma ten years ago. Di had been a very active grandmother and cared for her grandson during the day while his parents were working before starting primary school. Di saw the counsellor regularly for 2 years. Di reports the experience helped her to process her grief and adjust to life without her grandson.

Domain 6 – Social and environmental stressors

Di is very worried about Anthony and his health. Di often says she does not know how she will cope without him.

Domain 7 – Family and other supports

Di and Anthony have six adult children (and four spouses) and 14 grandchildren. One daughter visits several times a month and regularly checks that Di and Anthony have everything they need. The other five children live interstate and visit as often as possible (1-2 times a year). Di enjoys their visits very much. Di's daughter is coming at least weekly since Anthony's condition has deteriorated and her other children are also talking about coming to visit soon.

Domain 8 – Engagement and motivation

Di is very worried about Anthony and resists people “making a fuss.” Di is mainly bothered by the decline in sleep quality she is experiencing but is otherwise reluctant to discuss her feelings.