

Case study 5

Tom

Tom is in his 80's and since he had a stroke he has been unable to communicate verbally. He has recently been moved into a care home after having an accident at home. Tom was referred to the local advocacy organisation and Sarah, the advocate, visited him. Over the course of several visits Sarah noticed that Tom appeared to be very angry and upset most of the time. She explained who she was and what she did and gradually he seemed to relax in her presence.

To help her find out more about Tom and his situation Sarah contacted his son in Canada and discovered that Tom had always been adamant that he wanted never to go into a care home. During her visits to Tom she noticed that some of the care home staff didn't seem to engage with him or give him a choice about anything such as food or where he wanted to sit. When challenged on this they said it was because he couldn't communicate. Sarah believed that Tom felt that he no longer had any control over his life in even the smallest way and that this was making him angry and upset.

Questions for discussion

- What are the advocacy issues?
- How would you advocate for Tom?