

Critical Thinking Exercise – Extra Credit

Due April 19, 2021

Mrs. Smith, an 81-year old widow, lives alone in an apartment where she has been for the last fifty years. Her husband died over twenty years ago and her son and his family live in another section of the city. Often her neighbors would help out, but in the last few years most of her neighbors have either died or moved away.

Despite arthritis, diabetes, and some visual impairment, Mrs. Smith has been able to function independently with minimal supports from family or friends. Three recent incidents, however, have made her son question if his mother can continue to live independently. About two months ago while she was cooking, the kitchen curtains caught fire. The fire department was summoned, and was able to put out the fires before there was extensive damage to her apartment or the building. No one was injured in this fire. This was the second fire Mrs. Smith had inadvertently set. The first started when she turned on the stove without removing a dish towel that was next to a burner, but she was able to extinguish the fire by herself. About five weeks ago, Mrs. Smith fell in the bathtub. Fortunately, she did not sustain any serious injury, but her bruises make it even more difficult for her to shop and carry groceries up to her third-floor apartment. Her son would like her to move into a congregate living setting for older adults in his community. Mrs. Smith is adamantly opposed to this idea and wishes to continue living independently in the community.

Write a 3- to 5-page paper that shows critical, original thinking about this case by answering the questions below. Write it in APA 7 format.

This assignment is optional and is worth 25 points.

1. What do you think is the root cause of Mrs. Smith's problem? Could it be dementia or something else?
2. Do you think that Mrs. Smith can retain some measure of independence?
3. As a social worker, how would you intervene with this family?