

Alison, 71 years Assessment 1

Alison is a 71-year-old woman who, up until very recently, lived at home with her retired husband Eric. They have been married for 46 years and have three adult children and several grandchildren. Eric has recently had a major stroke and has been hospitalised for some weeks now. Alison has an established diagnosis of Bipolar Affective Disorder and she has been supported at home by two of her adult daughters who had been visiting twice a week. However, one of her daughters has recently moved away and her remaining daughter reports that she is feeling very stressed as her own twin daughters are currently studying for their Year 12 exams and cannot provide the level of support that she once could.

Alison has been in contact with your service for some months now, and the frequency of her contact has increased since her husband's stroke as her daughters have suggested that she is not sleeping well at night and is calling them during the night claiming that neighbours are making too much noise. She has been pacing around the house for an hour or two before going back to bed each night. They reported that she has begun drinking a bottle of wine a night in attempt to get to have better sleep which is out of character for their mum. She is reported to be quite dismissive of her daughters when they have suggested some additional help, other than that provided by her GP. They have also told you that Alison has not been showering as often as she used to and has also called them from the local shopping centre last week, claiming that she could not locate her car, which was at home. Since Eric was hospitalised the local Home Care service has been visiting the house and report that Alison has been offering them small gifts and money, often getting quite irritable when they refuse to accept these. They have told Alison's daughter that she seems to be very talkative and has developed a tremor to her hands which makes it difficult for her to help with cleaning.

Alison says that she thinks that since her husband has been in hospital, she has found it increasingly difficult as he was 'my rock' and they 'used to go everywhere together' which when she thinks about makes her sad. She particularly misses going to her choral singing group of a Tuesday as she says the other women there 'liked Eric more than me.' She believes they may think she is 'evil' because she is a not a regular at their church, but she laughs about this for some time at when she is asked about it. She says she has composed songs for them to sing which she loves. She says she has not been eating very well because Eric used to do all the cooking and she says she 'can't seem to get organised' and has left the stove on several times according to her daughter who has brought her to her appointment with you. Alison's daughter reports that she is very concerned that her mother is 'getting high again' and thinks this may be due to Alison not remembering to take her medication regularly. Her husband used to leave it out for her to take with meals and supervised her Webster Packs. She is also concerned that she may not be taking her medication for hypertension which was prescribed a year ago. Her mother has reported becoming dizzy and needing to sit down at least a couple times a day.