

## Case study five: Daisy Bell

Daisy Bell is a 90 year old lady who is physically very fit and well. She was diagnosed with Vascular Dementia when she was 82. She has a close relationship with her daughter, Kate, who lives a few streets away. Daisy had always been a fit active lady who took up swimming when she retired. She swam every weekday morning at the same time, and had developed a good social network at the gym, where she and the other morning swimmers and caught up on their news over a coffee after swimming. Eventually, as her memory started to worsen, Daisy stopped going to the gym, although due to the nature of the condition and the duration of her routine, she thought she was still going. At this point, Kate became concerned that Daisy was withdrawing into herself and became concerned because Daisy was not showering at home (Daisy had not needed to use the shower at home for several years as she had been showering at the gym). Kate felt that Daisy was becoming depressed and isolated. Daisy had stopped washing and became distressed when her daughter tried to prompt or support her in this area.

Angela, Daisy's social worker, visited Daisy with Kate present. Using carefully worded questions Angela asked Daisy about the things that were important to her, her love of swimming, and via this about her personal care routine. Through this conversation, it became clear that Daisy would not be accepting of a carer to support with personal care and would potentially become confused and distressed as to why it was happening. She told Angela that she was going swimming every day and so didn't need to shower at home. Based on this information and Kate's knowledge of Daisy's views before she developed dementia it was decided that the best outcome would be for Daisy to be supported to go back to the gym to swim and shower there. Both Kate and Angela felt this would be what Daisy would choose for herself if she had capacity. Angela asked her daughter how she would feel about taking her mother to the baths and supporting her to shower there. Kate felt this would be fine as in that environment it would be usual for her to be about in the shower and changing area and offering support would be unremarkable.

Angela approached the local leisure centre to explain the situation and they agreed to give Kate free admission if she was attending with Daisy. The outcome was that Daisy was able to go back to enjoying swimming and socialising but also because having a shower after swimming was natural to her she was able to manage her personal hygiene in a familiar environment.