

Learning the Language

Helpful Hints to Access the Help of Other Agencies/Disciplines

Mental Health

- Educate yourself on the legal mandates, responsibilities and limitations of the agency
- Approach with an open mind rather than being set on a particular outcome
- Provide a baseline by describing:
 - Client's typical behavior and how current behavior differs from it
 - Changes in sleep pattern, appetite, activity level, mood, or behavior
- Review factors leading up to the problem and inform them of any factors that might be relevant
- Inform them of any medical problems and all medications, including dose and frequency
- Find out if there is a family history of mental illness or previous diagnosis of mental illness

Law Enforcement

- Understand the laws, what the officer is mandated to do, what the officer cannot do
- Focus on the facts, avoid gray areas
- Gather documentation which would support the case
- Discuss crimes and penal code violations, not social problems

Emergency Medical Services/Transport

- Provide all medical and medication history that is available to you
- If client is resistant or fearful of hospitalization, use your social work skills to find out what the source of the fear is.
 - Was it a previous negative experience or perhaps a feeling of shame due to her present hygiene?
 - Validating client's feelings and understanding the resistance may help you eliminate the barriers.

Financial Institution

- Understand your state statutes regarding fraud and financial exploitation
- Provide the institution with your suspicions and reason for investigation.
- Provide documentation if available.