

Paula Plummer Scenario

Marilyn Marvin

Your life:

- You have been a home health aide for the past 5 years after graduating from the nursing assistant program at the local technical college.
- You are proud of your training and believe you give your very best to all your clients.
- You have been married to your husband, Mickey, for 3 years. He was recently laid off when the plant closed.
- You are very fond of your client, Paula, and wish her daughter would visit her more often.

You value:

- Hard work
- Your relationship with your clients
- Education; you would like to get your RN or LPN degree someday
- Your marriage to Mickey, even though his layoff has resulted in some arguments about money

You appear in Scenes One, Three, and Four

Summary of the Scenario

Paula Plummer is a 71-year-old woman with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and Congestive Heart Failure (CHF). She has lived in her home for 35 years and has lived alone since her husband's death five years ago. She has been receiving home health care for two years. Her home health aide, Marilyn Marvin, comes in 5 times a week to help her with personal care, ambulation, checking vital signs, etc. Another caregiver comes on the weekends. Her daughter, Violet Smith, who lives several hundred miles away, comes to visit her mother for a weekend visit. Violet contacts the home health aide's supervisor stating that Marilyn has been stealing money and family heirlooms from her mother and insists that the caregiver be fired. The caregiver has been a good employee with no history of problems.

Eventually, the evidence indicates that Paula has been giving gifts of money and other valuable household property to Marilyn. Paula considers Marilyn a loving friend more than just her caregiver.

Lives

- **Paula Plummer**, a 71-year old client of the Purple Plains Home Health Agency
- **Marilyn Marvin**, Paula's home health aide
- **Mickey Marvin**, Marilyn's unemployed husband
- **Jolene Johnson**, Marilyn's boss and owner of the Purple Plains Home Health Agency
- **Violet Smith**, Paula's daughter who lives out of town
- **Nancy Naybor**, Paula's next door neighbor
- **Al Smith**, Violet's husband
- **Ron Records**, Documentation Specialist

Who is in each Scene

- **Scene One** (on Blue paper): Paula, Marilyn, Mickey, Nancy
- **Scene Two** (Green): Violet, Jolene, Al
- **Scene Three** (Yellow): Jolene, Marilyn
- **Scene Four** (Pink): Paula, Marilyn, Mickey, Nancy

Marilyn Marvin, age 27

Starter page

- You have been a home health aide for the past 5 years after graduating from the nursing assistant program at the local technical college.
- You are proud of your training and believe you give your very best to all your clients.
- You have been married to your husband, Mickey, for 3 years.
- Mickey was recently laid off when the plant closed. He had worked there for 5 years.
- Mickey is having trouble finding a good job in your small town. Money is tight, but you know you'll get by somehow.
- You are very fond of your client, Paula, and wish her daughter would visit her more often. You try to make up for Paula's loneliness by doing extra favors, like bringing her magazines and books.

You value:

- Hard work
- Your relationship with your clients
- Education; you would like to get your RN or LPN degree someday
- Your marriage to Mickey, even though his layoff has resulted in some arguments about money

Props: None

Scenes you are in: One (Blue), Three (Yellow), and Four (Pink)

Warm-Up

Mickey and Marilyn at home:

- Marilyn, tell Mickey what time he should pick you up from Paula's today and wish him good luck at his job interview.

Paula, Violet, Al, and Nancy:

- Paula, talk to Violet on the phone about Violet's upcoming visit. You are excited to see her.
- Nancy, talk with Paula about her daughter's upcoming visit.
- Al, talk to Violet about how she's worried to be away from work, even on the weekend.

Jolene and Ron:

- Jolene and Ron, review Jolene's agency policy on giving and receiving gifts.

Scene One: Blue

Time: Friday evening, Paula's home

Participants: Paula, Marilyn, Mickey, and Nancy

Marilyn: Well, I think I'm finished for the day, Paula. Mickey's here to pick me up. I hope he had good luck with his job interview. It's been tough since the plant closed.

Paula: Marilyn, listen, I know things are hard for you and Mickey right now. I want you to take this check for \$100 to help out with groceries or the light bill or whatever.

Nancy: Terrific idea, Paula! Marilyn should be rewarded for doing such a good job!

Marilyn: Oh, Paula, I just can't. You've already been so generous with us. You gave me those plants from the yard. And those special jars of jellies, and other stuff from your pantry, and ...

Paula: Please. You kids are so nice to me. Just last week, Mickey came over and fixed my leaky faucet.

Marilyn: Well, we couldn't let it just drip like that. Besides, you already gave me your beautiful silver candlesticks for my birthday. I don't want to take your money—I'm really just doing my job.

Mickey enters.

Mickey: Hello, ladies. Paula, here's a book Marilyn asked me to pick up from the library for you.

Paula: Oh, thank you, Mickey. It really helps make my weekend go faster when I have a good book to read. But, did I tell you? My daughter might come up for a visit. She said she'd try.

Nancy: It's been months since Violet was here!

Mickey: That's great, Paula. Let's go, Marilyn. I didn't get that job. I need to get today's paper. Maybe there's something new in the want ads.

Paula: Please let me help out, Mickey. I just wrote Marilyn another little check. Please convince her to take it.

Mickey: If Paula wants to give us a check, what's wrong with that?

Marilyn: I feel bad about the other checks Paula has written to me lately. Paula, what would your family think if they knew?

Paula: I am perfectly capable of managing my money, Marilyn. It's none of my daughter's business! Besides, friends help each other out. I think of you both as friends.

Mickey: After all, I did fix Paula's faucet for free—a plumber would have cost lots more than \$100. We could consider it like a loan, Marilyn.

Nancy: If it makes Paula happy, where's the harm?

Marilyn: Well, ok, Paula. And thank you so much! We'd better get going. See you on Monday!

Paula: Have a good weekend, kids!

Scene Three: Yellow

Time: Monday afternoon, Jolene's office

Participants: Jolene and Marilyn

Jolene: Thanks for coming in, Marilyn. Please sit down. I'm afraid I've received a very serious complaint about you.

Marilyn: Oh no. What? I've never had a complaint before.

Jolene: I know. Violet Smith came to visit her mother this weekend, and she noticed the family's silver candlesticks were missing. She also said Paula has written several personal checks to you over the last few months. Is that true?

Marilyn: Well, yes, but she just insisted that I take the checks and other gifts. She knew that Mickey was laid off, and even with the raise I just got, it's hard to get by on just one salary. Jolene, you have to believe me! It was all Paula's idea.

Jolene: Violet thinks that you stole the candlesticks and tricked Paula into writing checks to you. Violet wants to call the police and she wants me to report you to the State.

Marilyn: Paula insisted that I take those candlesticks for my birthday. Paula said she wanted me to have something special because she loves me so much.

Jolene: Do you remember the company policy on taking gifts, Marilyn?

Marilyn: I sort of remember the policy on gifts, but not the details. I think I read it five years ago, when I first started.

Jolene: This is a serious charge, Marilyn.

Marilyn: Jolene, it all started small with checks for only \$10-\$20. The offer of \$100 was a big surprise to me! Mickey wanted me to accept the \$100 because we are having some hard times right now.

Jolene: This is a good example of why we have a gift policy, Marilyn. It's there to protect our clients, but also to protect our staff from these kinds of situations.

Marilyn: Jolene, you must understand how hard it is to turn Paula down. It makes her so happy to be able to give back. You know, Paula's family hasn't been there for months. I've been more like Paula's daughter than Violet!

Jolene: Marilyn, I'm sorry, but I have to pull you from the assignment at Paula's until this is cleared up. I may be able to assign you to another client. But I don't have anything right now. I'll call you after I've talked with Paula and Violet.

Marilyn: All right, Jolene. I'm really sorry about this.

Marilyn gets up and leaves

Purple Plains Home Health Agency Policy on Gifts

POLICY

Purple Plains Home Health Agency (hereafter known as “the agency”) staff shall transact business with clients free from offers or solicitation of gifts and favors in exchange for influence or assistance. It is the agency’s intent that this policy be construed broadly to avoid even the appearance of improper activity.

PROCEDURE

1. Agency staff are prohibited from soliciting tips, personal gratuities, or gifts from clients. Staff are also prohibited from accepting money from clients. If a client or another individual wishes to present staff with a monetary gift, he or she should be referred to the agency’s owner.
2. Staff shall not accept gifts, favors, services, entertainment, or other things of value to the extent that decision-making or actions affecting the agency might be influenced. Therefore, staff may only accept gifts of a nominal value from clients. The agency has made no attempt to define “nominal” as a specific dollar value. Rather, the agency expects its staff to exercise good judgment and discretion in accepting gifts. To the extent possible, these gifts should be shared with co-workers.
3. If staff have any doubt or concern about whether specific gifts should be accepted, the owner of the agency should be contacted.

Scene Four: Pink

Time: A Friday evening during the first few weeks Marilyn was working with Paula

Participants: Marilyn, Mickey, Paula, and Nancy

Marilyn: Well, I think I'm finished for the day, Paula. My husband's here to pick me up. Are you all set for the evening?

Paula: I really need to do something about that leaky faucet in the kitchen.

Nancy: Maybe Marilyn's husband could take a look at it.

Marilyn: Oh, I'm sure Jolene has a list of agencies that provide home repair services. I'll bring the list next week.

Mickey honks his car horn.

Paula: Oh, that must be your husband. Please invite him in! I'd love to meet him.

Marilyn: I'm sure he'd like to meet you, too, but our agency requires that we keep information about our clients confidential. Let me just run outside and let him know I'm almost done.

Nancy: Gee, Marilyn, what would a little "hello" hurt?

Marilyn goes out to Mickey's car.

Marilyn: Hi, hon. I'm almost finished up here. It will just be another couple minutes.

Mickey: Can't I come in and meet your new client?

Marilyn: Afraid not, Mickey. Remember I told you about client confidentiality...

Mickey: That's right-- sorry! I'll wait in the car.

Marilyn goes back into Paula's house.

Paula: I never thought about the confidentiality rule. In our small town, it seems like everyone knows everyone else's business. Now that you mention it, Marilyn, I appreciate that my personal life and medical information are protected.

Nancy: Paula, don't forget about the matter we discussed earlier.

Paula: Oh, yes. Before you leave, Marilyn, I want to give you this check for \$20 to show you how much I value our friendship.

Marilyn: That's very kind, but no thank you. It's easy to be nice to you. It's part of doing my job.

Paula: But you know I consider you more than a caregiver. I think of you as a second daughter.

Marilyn: Our agency doesn't allow us to accept gifts. I could lose my job for accepting gifts or money, Paula. But I thank you so much for thinking of me.

Nancy: Now I understand why Marilyn can't accept gifts, Paula. I know Marilyn would never steal, but I guess taking gifts could be misunderstood.

Paula: Well...I can understand that you have rules to follow, Marilyn. I didn't know you could get in trouble for accepting just a small gift. I think of you like a family member, but I have to remember that you are my caregiver, not my daughter.

Marilyn: Thanks for understanding, Paula. I hope you have a good weekend.

Marilyn leaves.

Paula Plummer, Individualized Plan of Care

(excerpted)

Diagnosis:

- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Congestive Heart Failure (CHF)

Services:

- Home health aide services 7 x week for bathing, personal care, ambulation of 25-50 feet, daily pulse, blood pressure and respiration, daily weight. Report any changes to RN.
- SN (RN) Supervisory visits every 2 weeks

Goals:

- Ambulate 50 feet without shortness of breath; no acute episodes of CHF; maintain weight between 151 and 155 lbs

Medications:

- Foradil aerolizer oral inhalation, 12 mcg (1 capsule) every 12 hr via Airolizer (TM) inhaler
- Albuterol sulfate, Metered-dose inhaler (MDI), 2 inhalations as needed; MAX 12 inhalations per 24 hr
- Digoxin 0.25 mg. daily
- Lasix 40 mg. daily
- K-Dur 20 one tablet daily
- Alprazolam 0.25 mg. up to 3 x day as needed for anxiety