



CHAPTER 14

CASE STUDIES

Gerontology for the Health Care Professional, Fourth Edition

Regula H. Robnett, Nancy Brossoie, and Walter C. Chop

Case 1: Patty is a 74-year-old Black woman, living alone in suburban America. Although she describes her quality of life as good, she needs help with basic activities of daily living. Patty has no nearby family, as her children have lived across the country for nearly 20 years. Although she still talks with them on a weekly basis, she sometimes lacks companionship. This isolation from family may be linked to recent symptoms of depression.

After church one Sunday, Patty talked with a friend about her ongoing challenges with her daily care needs. This friend recommended that Patty apply for assistance through the local Area Agency on Aging to receive some help. She did, and found out that she was eligible to receive personal care and home health services.

- 1. Describe the typical worker that will help Patty with her daily needs.**
- 2. What types of services will Patty's formal caregivers likely provide?**
- 3. What are some of the challenges that her direct care worker may experience?**

Case 2: Jack, a 67-year-old White man, and Tim, a 68-year old Black man, have been friends for over 60 years. They attended school together for many years in Detroit until Jack transferred to a different school when his father got promoted and they moved to a more affluent community. The same year, Tim's father was seriously injured in a car accident and could no longer work. Tim dropped out of school and got a job on an assembly line at an automobile manufacturing company to help support his family. Jack went to college, earned a degree, and had a career in finance. Tim was laid off in his 40s when his company moved the manufacturing facility overseas. After that, he had difficulty finding work, and held down a number of jobs before a series of medical conditions forced him to retire. Today, Jack is relatively healthy, lives in an upper middle class neighborhood, and is planning to retire next year, at which point his full pension and postretirement medical benefits will kick in. Tim lives in a small house in a rural community about 30 miles away from the closest city. He is on a fixed income and his health is failing.

- 1. What are some examples of situations and conditions that Jack and Tim are both at an increased risk for now that they are older adults?**

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2. From a statistical standpoint, which friend, Jack or Tim, is likely to live longer, and why?

3. Is Tim a good candidate for telehealth services? Why or why not?