

## *You Solve the Case*

### Doing God's Work

A man who had been the pastor of his church began to attend an adult day health care center. The family dresses him up in his best outfit, takes him to the center, and tells him that they will return at 4:30. In the morning, he comes in, has coffee and reads from the newspaper. The gentleman is fine and a pleasant individual. But at 11 o'clock in the morning, he gets ready to leave the center. When staff members say that he should stay, he tells them that it is time for him to go to church and to attend to his people. When the staff members tell him that he does not have to go to church, the man gets angry and tells them that they are in league with the devil. He threatens to hit them if they do not let him go. What should the staff members do?

**Who is this person?** It appears that this man was a very dedicated preacher, and has a strong sense of responsibility to his congregation.

**Making use of abilities that remain.** This gentleman appears to be in good physical condition and has good social skills.

**Gather the evidence.** It would be very useful to ask the man where he needs to go and why. He seems to be the type of person who could give a coherent answer.

**Use the formula.** Two issues arise. First, staff and family need information and education about why this might be happening and how to deal with this situation,. Also, environmental interventions are needed to allow the older man to know what day it is NOT.

**Solution.** The key is to find a way for the gentleman to conclude for himself that today is not Sunday. There are a number of options for this. One is for the family to NOT dress him in "Sunday clothes" when he is going to the center. The other is to put a sign next to the door which says "Today is \_\_\_\_ (Monday; Tuesday; etc.)" so that he will see the sign when he gets ready to leave the center. Then the staff members can just point to the sign to let him know what day it is. Also, this lets the sign convey the information, rather than trying to argue with the man about what day it is.

**CLUE:** Why does he think it is Sunday?