

Financial abuse case study A:

Harry is not the adult at risk's real name.

Harry is in his mid-50's and lives in a shared supported living service with 3 other people. Harry has a mild/moderate learning disability. He accesses the local community independently and attends his local church every Sunday.

I had a phone call to inform me that Harry had been robbed. I went to see Harry who was very upset and said he wanted the man to be punished.

I then supported Harry to give his statement to the police.

I supported him to get to the station where he gave his statement; this was videoed so Harry wouldn't have to keep going over what had happened to him. This was a reasonable adjustment to reduce his stress. Harry was thanked for being brave enough to tell the police what had happened to him.

I found out there was a witness who had contacted the police as she was concerned that Harry was being taken advantage of due to his disability. There was also CCTV footage of the crime from a local garage which was only found due to the witness and Harry going to the police and telling them what happened.

Harry was told that the police would contact me to let me know if the man had pleaded guilty to the robbery - meaning it wouldn't have to go to court. I would then pass the information onto Harry.

Unfortunately the man pleaded not guilty, meaning that Harry would have to give evidence in court. This made Harry very nervous. I worked with my team to reassure Harry that this would be fine and that he would be supported at all times to go through the whole process.

I worked alongside an intermediary to support Harry around this, which involved talking through the whole court process. I did this by supporting Harry to have a look around the court and meet the witness team who are there to help put Harry at ease.

They helped to explain the whole process and we had a look at the video link room where Harry would be giving his evidence. This was to help reduce his stress as Harry had indicated to me that being in the same room as the defendant would worry him.

This was all explained to Harry so that when the time came to go and give evidence it wouldn't seem so scary.

I also reassured Harry that I would be with him the whole time and this seemed to help Harry feel safe.

Once we had come away from the court visit I praised Harry for how brave he had been. Harry said he was very proud of himself for doing this. When the day came Harry and myself were taken to the witness waiting area where the witness services, the intermediary and myself worked together to put Harry at ease. When the time came for Harry to give his evidence he did this very confidently and calmly.

We then left the court and were told that we would get a call from the police to let us know the verdict. We were contacted about a week later and told that the defendant had been sentenced to 3 years in prison. I went to Harry's house to tell him the news in person. Harry was over the moon. I told Harry again how brave he had been to go through with this.