

CASE STUDY

FINANCIAL ABUSE OF OLDER PEOPLE

Case study seven: Suspected abuse of a Power of Attorney

Source: CPA Australia member

Jim was the accountant for Marj and had been for a number of years. Every year, he went to the retirement village to visit Marj and get the information for her tax return. This particular year, the interest that Marj received from the bank was much less than normal. Jim had never really got involved in Marj's affairs, but it was strange that the interest was so low. He questioned her about it and she did not know why. Her son Robert looked after all her investments and maybe he had put it somewhere else. He had power of attorney, and was a signatory to her bank account.

Jim checked the ATO pre fill report to see if there were any new investments that were providing her with income. However, the only change was that the interest on her investment account at the bank had gone down.

He knew her son Robert, as he was also his accountant.

- How should Jim approach the discussion with Marj?
- Should he talk directly with Robert about this? If so, what would he seek clarification on and how would he go about it?