

## Case of Ida Vanderheyden

Mrs. Ida Vanderheyden is a right-handed, 75 year old, Dutch and English-speaking widow who lived alone on her dairy farm outside of Goderich, in Southwestern, Ontario, for most of her adult life. She moved recently into a townhouse located in the town of Goderich (population = 8000) because of her desire to retire from the dairy farm and her declining ability to manage living without supports close by. Her townhouse is a two-storey single-family home. The kitchen, living room, powder room (i.e., two-piece bathroom), and laundry and storage facilities are located on the main floor, and the bedroom and main bathroom are on the second floor. Her living quarters are small and cluttered.

Mrs. Vanderheyden has never learned to drive a car and has relied on public transportation or her children since her husband died six years ago. She is a member of the Women's Institute and the Ontario Farmer's Association and enjoys gardening, cheese-making, and canning. Mrs. Vanderheyden has two adult children. Her son took over management of the dairy farm eight years ago. She is in contact with him on a regular basis but rarely gets to see him because he is busy with the farm. He is married and has three children. Her daughter lives in Goderich and provides most of the support for her mother. She encouraged Mrs. Vanderheyden to move into Goderich so that her mother could be closer and have more access to various support services. The daughter is married and has two young children.

Mrs. Vanderheyden is in good general health. She suffers from osteoarthritis in both hips and knees, cataracts, kyphosis, and she reported having "ringing in her ears" (i.e., tinnitus). She is taking Metamucil daily, 1 aspirin per day, and uses Clear Vision eye drops as needed. She is physically strong and was quite active until a fall which occurred October 18<sup>th</sup> leaving her bruised and shaken. On November 30<sup>th</sup>, Mrs. Vanderheyden had a second fall, this time on the ice outside her home, severely bruising her left side. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, the daughter took Mrs. Vanderheyden to her own family physician because Mrs. Vanderheyden's physician had recently retired. The young family physician assessed the bruising. During the session, he communicated primarily with the daughter who periodically translated what the doctor said to Mrs. Vanderheyden. The doctor referred Mrs. Vanderheyden to Home Care for physiotherapy. Her history of bruising from falls has resulted in the development of a fear of falling. On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mrs. Vanderheyden moved in temporarily with her daughter, son-in-law and 2 grandchildren to alleviate her fears and receive assistance to help with the recovery from the falls. The son-in-law is not pleased with this situation.

*Adapted from Case Studies in Gerontology for the Applied Health Sciences: An Education Resource developed by J.B. Orange, S. Hobson, M.F. Cheeseman, A.A. Vandervoot, and M.E. Black, July, 1997.*