

## WRITING A LETTER OF CAPACITY: WHAT DOES THE DOCTOR NEED TO KNOW?

- Past medical history
- Medications
- How long there have been concerns?
- What is being noticed that raises concerns?
- Any recent changes to health/medication?
- Any recent major life events?
  
- Is the patient at risk for immediate harm to themselves?
- Is the patient being harmed or at risk for harm from someone else (verbal, physical, sexual, financial)?
  - Consider Adult Protective Services (APS)

# Vulnerable Adults

- Age 18 or older AND
- Have a mental, developmental, or physical impairment AND
- Is unable to
  - a. Make or communicate responsible decisions to manage their own care or resources, OR
  - b. Carry out or arrange for essential activities of daily living, OR
  - c. Protect oneself from abuse




# What is Adult Protective and Community Services (APS)?



APS receives and investigates reports of abuse to vulnerable adults

APS provides short-term services to protect the health, safety and welfare of vulnerable adults who have been abused, neglected, or financially exploited



## APS Goals



### *Safety:*

Remedy the abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of a vulnerable adult

### *Stabilize:*

the situation through counseling and/or support services

### *Respect:*

the individual's right to self-determination

# Legal Obligations

- Autonomy, self-determination
- Protection from abuse and self-neglect
- Housing, safe disposition







A photograph of a cluttered kitchen counter. In the foreground, there is a box filled with papers, a red candle, and a crocheted yellow star with a white flower. The background shows a kitchen with various items on the counter, including a red bowl, a white pitcher, and a white plate. The overall scene suggests a busy, lived-in environment.

# Considerations

- Is the patient in a safe living environment?
- Does the patient have the capacity to decide their living arrangements?
- Is the supervision provided adequate?
- At what point, if any, should a report be made to APS? On what grounds?