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?
Older Adults Living Alone

Unbefriendened:
- Lack capacity to make decisions
- Have not completed legal documents
- Have not designated a legally authorized decision maker

Adult Orphans:
- Have decision-making capacity
- Have not completed legal documents
- Have not designated a legally authorized decision maker
- *At risk of becoming unbefriended*

Other terms:
- Unrepresented
- Isolated
Guardianship

A legal relationship between a competent adult (the "guardian") and a person who, because of they are impaired in some way, is no longer able to take care of their own affairs (the "ward").

Legally Authorized Representatives

Power of Attorney

- Power of Attorney for Healthcare is separate from a Power of Attorney for Finances
- Often both are needed when addressing disposition because finances impact options
- A person must have capacity when creating the document
Hierarchy of Legally-Authorized HEALTHCARE Decision-Makers

- Only when a patient LAKCS CAPACITY

- Court appointed guardian
  (In a court document)

- Designated Health Care Agent
  (In a valid DPOA-HC)

- Patient-Designated Surrogate
  (Documented in health record)

- Appointed Surrogate
  —selected by agreement among “interested persons”
  (Declaration of Surrogate)
Older Adults Living Alone Assistance and Intervention

- Public and Private Agencies/Organizations
- Protective Services
- Guardianship and Conservatorship

https://www.catholiccharitieshawaii.org/
https://www.elderlyaffairs.com/
https://thecaregiverfoundation.org/
Susan M. Christensen, MD, MBA
smc96@hawaii.edu