Case study 'Simon', evidence 2: Supervision notes – Critical reflection

Simon discussed his work with M and how he wanted to use it as the basis for his ASYE reflective essay. He discussed two areas that he would reflect upon.

1. Social work role in relation to multi-disciplinary working on cases
2. Management of risk with respect to M managing his own finances

We discussed Simon's understanding of the social work role in a community mental health team and what motivated him to work in this field. Simon showed a good motivation and insight into the reasons he wanted to work in this field but could not explain it was why he wanted to be a social worker above, say, a CPN or OT. Simon advised he strongly believed in the importance of values and putting service users first as a starting point for service provision, but agreed that his main motivation was to work in mental health rather than be a social worker. I suggested that that he might want to think psychodynamically, focusing on his previous experiences and his subconscious emotions regarding his motivations. I also advised that evidence promoted the need for social workers to be clear about their role and core values in order to avoid burn-out, and that Simon should work on developing his insight so that he might develop more clarity about his role.

We also discussed Simon's approach to risk. Simon appeared to display quite a naive approach to risk management with lots of references to the Dutch approach, as this was where he had grown up. I felt I had to play 'devil’s advocate' and provoke Simon to explore his experience of being responsible for the risks posed by others. Simon accepted his experience in this area was limited, but remembered a case where he had been requested by the Court of Protection to provide evidence that a service user did not have the capacity to manage their finances. Simon recalled that he had had to refer to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 code of practice document for guidance. I suggested that this might be something that he could perhaps do in M's case also. I reminded Simon that the Mental Capacity Act 2005 could be used to protect people's rights in a positive manner, if this was appropriate, and that Simon might like to refer to the code of practice as evidence that M should be supported by his care provider to manage his own finances.