

Collaborative Care, Young People, Grief, Loss and Trauma

Jeremy, a 13 year old boy, presents to a GP with his maternal aunt, Sharon.

Sharon is 43 years old, single and has no children of her own. Employed as a chef at a busy inner-city restaurant, she works long hours.

She has been seeing the same GP for around 15 years.

Sharon is fiercely independent and hard working, with a large social network. She has no history of major health issues but often jokes *"....doc you know I live hard but I also want to live long... that's why I come to see you!"*

Sharon attends her next GP appointment with Jeremy, who she introduces as her nephew. Sharon states that Jeremy now lives with her, after having recently moved from central Australia where he lived with his mother, father and siblings. The GP knew that Sharon had extended family in remote Australia with whom she had intermittent contact, but was not aware of any particularly close relationships.

Jeremy is a slight child, if anything, a tad underweight. He looks tired and drawn and is fidgety. He is wearing a long-sleeve hoodie, despite the warm conditions.

Jeremy appears comfortable with his aunt, and she with him. Sharon says that Jeremy wants to be seen on his own and that she'll wait for him in reception. Once alone with the GP, Jeremy becomes anxious and fidgety. He sits in a hunched position, avoiding eye contact.

After some coaxing Jeremy shares in a soft voice that he is worried because *'... every time I try to pee it burns like hell and when I do pee it stinks ...I dunno how long it has been going on for ... a while I s'pose. I'm like starting to freak out. I mean it's embarrassing but I'm starting to think that there's something really the matter with me...'* He admits to not sleeping well - waking up early, and tossing and turning at night.

As he speaks and becomes more relaxed he pushes up the sleeve of his hoodie. The GP notices fresh scratches on his arm. Becoming aware that the GP is looking, Jeremy quickly pulls his sleeve down.

Mental Health Professionals' Network

Emirates House
Level 8
257 Collins Street
Melbourne
VIC 3000

postal
PO Box 203
Flinders Lane
VIC 8009

email
contactus@mhpnp.org.au

telephone
1800 209 031

www.mhpnp.org.au

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