

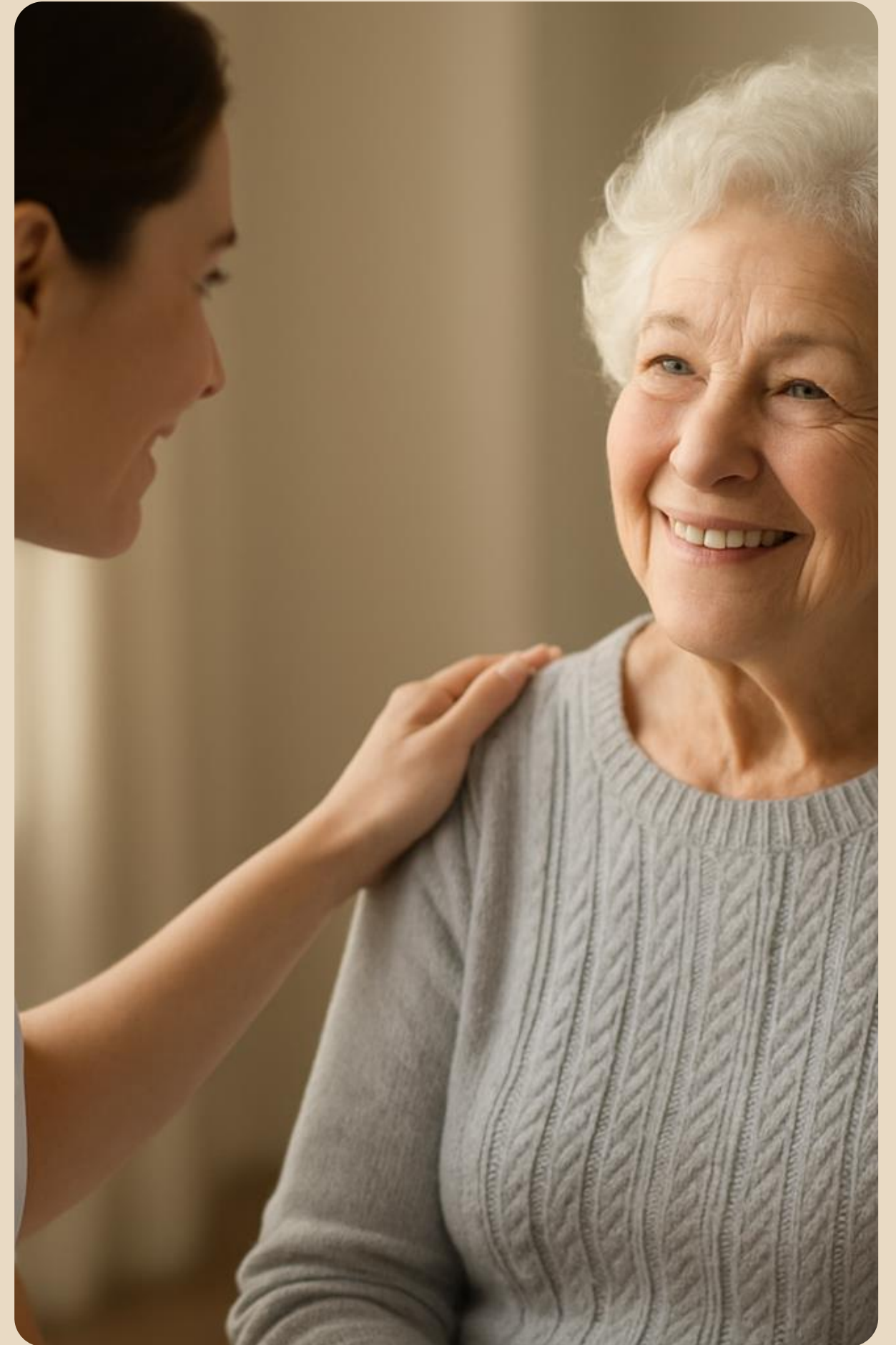


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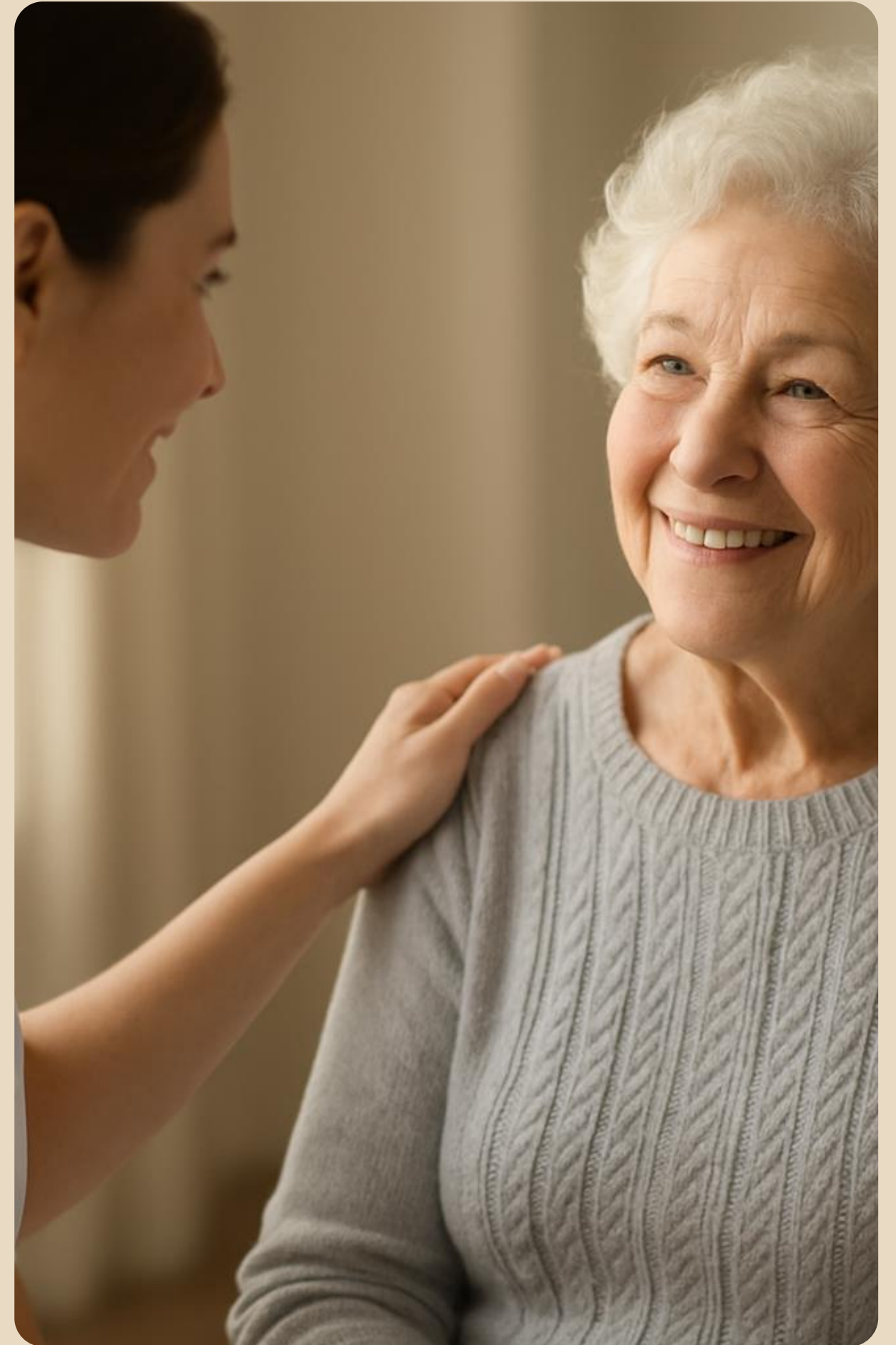
Consenting to Risk: Supporting Decision-Making While Respecting Self-Determination

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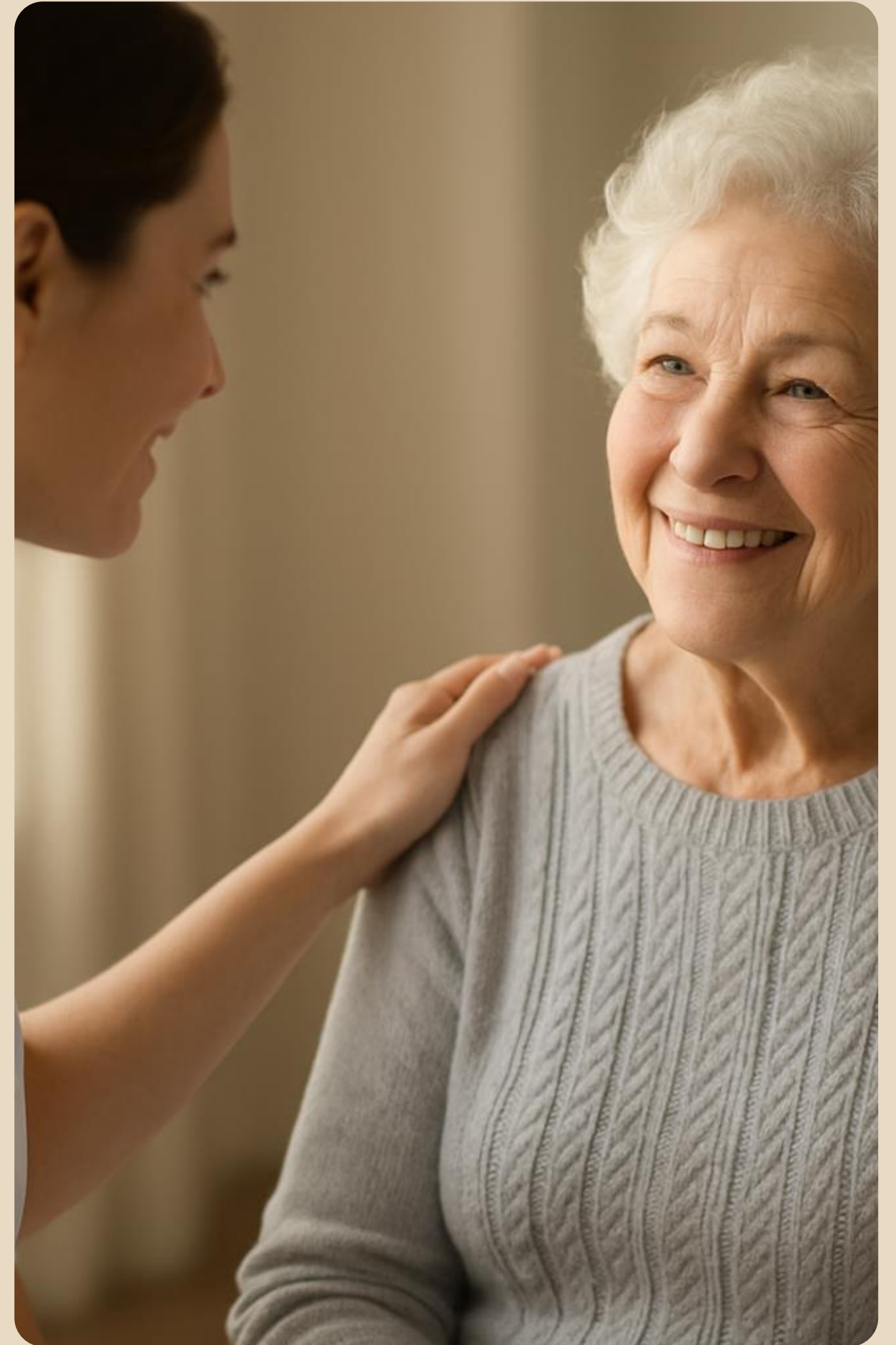
Conflict of Interest Declaration

I have no conflict of interest to declare.



Objectives

- Explain the ethical foundation of the dignity of risk
- Describe the conditions required for free and informed consent
- Distinguish the key concepts related to decision-making capacity
- Recognize challenges and identify action strategies



Dignity and consent

Dignity arises from an informed choice,
grounded in the right to self-determination

Without valid consent $\longrightarrow$ exposition

With consent $\longrightarrow$ choice aligned with
personal values

**The dignity of risk
begins with consent**



Free and Informed Consent

- Consent is a relational process
- Understanding the issues and risks
- Expressing one's values and preferences
- Actively participating in decision-making
- A well-informed decision is not necessarily a safe decision



Capacity to consent

- A professional obligation
- An unreasonable decision $\neq$ incapacity
- Capacity is context-specific

Assessment involves:

- Understanding
- Personal appreciation of information
- Reasoning
- Ability to express a choice



Vulnerability and Incapacity

- Cognitive impairment $\neq$ incapacity
- Vulnerability $\neq$ incapacity, nor absence of self-determination
- The greater the vulnerability, the more rigorous the support required
- Clinical prudence and rigor are essential



Professional Responsibility

- Clearly identify risks
- Support free and informed consent
- Assess capacity rigorously
- Respect expressed wishes
- Recognize that safety is not always the ultimate criterion



Challenges

- Confusion between impairment, vulnerability, and incapacity
- Pressure toward safety
- Fear of reprisals
- Tension between family and team
- Risk of well-intentioned paternalism



Possible solutions

- Structured and documented capacity assessments
- Early dialogue with the person and family
- Clarification of values and priorities
- Team training
- Support for relational autonomy





Conclusion

- The dignity of risk is not based on the absence of danger
- It is based on the quality of consent
- Our responsibility is not to eliminate risk, but to avoid deciding on the person's behalf