Name: Alan

Age: 22

Sex: Male

Family: Single

Occupation: Emergency medical technician

Presenting problem: Bizarre behavior

Alan was recently referred for a psychiatric evaluation. When he was unable to revive a heart attack victim by medical means during a recent emergency call, Alan attempted to revive the deceased victim with merely his touch. Based on reports, Alan appeared agitated that he could not revive the victim with his touch, and he blamed others for interfering in his attempts. This was the first incident of truly bizarre behavior that Alan has shown on the job.

Alan's supervisor states that he is one of the team's best paramedics and does consistently outstanding work, although he has been acting slightly odd recently. About two months ago, Alan began sharing with coworkers his beliefs of his divine purpose in life. Alan has been making increasingly frequent statements that he has been given divine powers to save lives with touch from his bare hands. Alan's supervisor says, "Alan's ability to do his job is not at question, but this recent episode has caused some concern. I don't want Alan to somehow think that his 'gift' is an acceptable substitute for his training." Alan's supervisor states that, right now, he's keeping a close eye on the situation but not making any rash decisions.

Alan reports that he first became aware of his so-called divine powers while at the beach two months ago when a bird landed on his hand while he was feeding it. He says that "a sort of electrical charge ran from my hand and through my entire body, and I knew it was my calling to save lives." Alan reports that birds follow him throughout his day and that he can hear them constantly urging him to save the lives of those who have recently died. When pressed for specifics, Alan says, "They usually have a deep, authoritative voice, which seems appropriate, since they claim to be divine messengers." During the interview, Alan displays an expressive, labile affect. He appears slightly disheveled and unkempt and presents as rather confused and easily agitated, saying, "I do not understand what is happening! I am just trying to save lives! It is my calling!"

A recent annual medical exam reported Alan to be in good health, with no medical concerns. Alan's job-mandated, routine urinalysis screens have all tested negative for any substance use, and Alan reported that he does not drink alcoholic beverages or use drugs. Alan's social relationships are intact and, thus far, unaffected by his bizarre beliefs.