



ADvantage Waiver can be Very ADvantageous

Ilene Down suddenly stopped dead in her tracks as she was walking down the hallway to bring Ben Down, her husband, some more warm water. She felt faint and lightheaded all of a sudden, so she leaned against the wall for support, for a few seconds until she could regain her composure. She had been experiencing these dizzy spells fairly frequently lately, as she was absolutely physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted from taking care of Ben.

Ilene and Ben had been married for 57 years, and they had truly had a wonderful life together. Ben had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's a little over two years ago, and he had been fairly easy to manage up until now. Over the past two months or so, he had tremendously digressed, and it was really taking a toll on Ilene as she watched her husband go downhill, day by day. She was his only caretaker, which was literally a 24-hour-a-day job. They had four grown children who lived out-of-state, who had children of their own now to take care of. All of their friends were in their 70's and 80's as well, with their own spouses and physical challenges to deal with, so Ilene could not rely on them for help.

Being a devoted wife for the past 57 years and a mother of four, Ilene was accustomed to putting herself and her own needs and desires last. She was used to living life as "low man on the totem pole," but now she was beginning to think that she was nearing the end of what her worn-out body and mind could handle. She was suffering from sleep deprivation, she was lightheaded much of the time, and she was losing weight - too much weight. To put it plainly, she simply wasn't taking care of herself because she was spending so much energy caring for Ben.

When Ilene finally reached the end of her rope, after 2 ½ years of walking this difficult path with Ben, she realized that she needed to seek out help, so she began exploring her options. After asking around to her friends and neighbors, she was given the name of a highly reputable elder law attorney who had helped a few of the families in their church.

Well, Ilene immediately made an appointment to see the

attorney, and after her counseling session with him, she found out about some options of which she had that she was unaware. She found out that the attorney could actually assist them with Medicaid qualification if she wanted to move Ben to the nursing home. Although this was not something that she was interested in doing, it was somewhat of a relief to her to know that his nursing home would be paid for in full, and she could stay at home and not become impoverished, while Ben would be getting the care and attention that he needed in the nursing home.

What was truly the best news that Ilene had heard in a long, long time was that the state had a program that the attorney could help them get qualified for that would pay for a part-time caregiver for Ben. This meant that he could stay home with her and she would have some relief during the day to have some time herself to do whatever she wanted, whether it be catch up on much needed sleep, run errands, shop, go to lunch with friends, anything! Ilene couldn't remember the last time she was able to do any of these things and not be worrying about Ben the whole time. What a blessing it was for her to hear about this! This program is called ADvantage Waiver.

And that is exactly what happened. Within two months of her meeting with the elder law attorney, he had gotten them qualified for ADvantage Waiver, and Ilene's health and life improved by leaps and bounds.

She told her friends who had given her the name of the knowledgeable attorney that going to see him was one of the best decisions she had ever made. Her friends just smiled and nodded their heads in agreement, because they too knew the feeling of relief that their dear friend had now.

Touch of Humor:

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

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HOLMES, HOLMES & NEISENT, P.L.L.C.

LEE M. HOLMES, MARK L. HOLMES & TRACY SPECK NEISENT, ATTORNEYS

501 N.W. 13TH STREET, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73103

phone: (405) 235-8455 fax: (405) 235-8454

www.medicaidoklahoma.com

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