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Ava: Life Continues



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A Partnership that Works

Lea loves her in-home care workers. Her dedicated daughter Barbara is grateful for help that makes her busy life possible. Springwell coordinates it all.

At 92, Lea (pictured below, right) has been blind for three years and has found adjusting to her loss of vision challenging. She spent much of her active adult life as a pharmacist, a wife, a mother, a skilled Filene's Basement shopper, and a legendary baker. While she is more limited now, Lea smiles often and expresses gratitude for all of those who "give of their heart" to help her continue to enjoy life.

A strong partnership between Lea, her daughter Barbara (pictured, center), Springwell, and the caregivers hired through Springwell's network of in-home care vendors makes the 24-hour assistance Lea needs possible.

Barbara is Lea's advocate and works closely with Lea's Springwell Case Manager, Ann (pictured, left), to keep Lea's care plan current as her needs change. Several years ago, Lea first started receiving Springwell services after a fractured hip and shoulder injury. As she lost her vision, her care plan was updated to include the additional services she needed. Barbara visits Lea every evening after her full work day and prepares dinner for the two of them to enjoy together. Lea also spends every weekend at Barbara's home.

While dining with Barbara every night is the highlight of Lea's day, Barbara has a long drive afterwards, and she was regularly getting home after 10 pm. Barbara's exhaustion led her to ask Ann for a few more hours of support for Lea each week. Ann met with the Springwell team and with her advocacy, the hours were approved and were able to be filled by the vendor. Lea's overnight caregiver comes earlier now to help her get ready for bed so that Barbara can get home for a bit more rest. Everyone recognizes that Barbara's well-being as her mother's advocate and caregiver is vital.

Lea shares that the caregivers hired through Springwell's vendor network are her "...right hand and her left hand. They are everything to me." Lea says that the role is not just completing tasks that these caregivers check off their list. They are her companions who grieved with her when she recently lost her beloved dog and who brought her cake and cards on her birthday. The partnership with family, Springwell, and caregivers keeps Lea safe and comfortable.

For more information about how your family can partner with Springwell, visit our website at www.springwell.com, or call 617-926-4100.



George & Ava: The Value of A Good Plan

george and ava



Ava and Rosa (left) continue to work together on the plan that George and Ava (right) put in place to achieve their goals for end of life care.

Ava sits comfortably in her living room looking out her picture window at the birds, surrounded by beautiful furniture, some of which she has designed. She knows she is still able to enjoy her home and this view because of the careful planning and preparation she and her husband George did before challenges of health confronted them.

As Ava and George advanced in age, they agreed that “putting things in order” would help them live out their lives according to their wishes. They were familiar with Springwell and reached out for assistance. The Springwell Private Care Management team became the resource to help with all their needs.

Rosa, their Private Care Manager, initially assisted with errands and outings for George when he gave up driving. They both quickly developed a rapport with Rosa and asked her to manage more personal and household responsibilities. Rosa has helped with managing finances, exploring housing options, and facilitating their plan for keeping the lifestyle they wanted while identifying their end of life care goals. When they decided to stay in their home, Rosa arranged for the caregivers who make that possible.

George passed away in November and while Ava is still grieving, she confidently states that all of the planning she and George did, including the tough topics they discussed and the decisions they made have helped her cope.

George had the end of life care he wanted, and that comforts Ava greatly. Ava offers one piece of advice to aging adults: start planning early so that you can live on your own terms.

Ava continues to count on Rosa for many of the supports that allow her to live well in this next chapter of her life. Ava’s goal is to live healthfully so she can remain socially active. Ava’s social plan includes outings with Rosa and surrounding herself with neighbors and the multigenerational network of friends she has from her life with George and her career as a school teacher.

Ava is content with the life she is now living. She appreciates the support of her in-home caregivers and values her relationship with Rosa who visits often and is a phone call away if a new need arises.

did you know?

There are Springwell programs that can help with some of the key issues associated with aging well on your own terms, including:

- Planning ahead
- Making your goals known
- Managing finances
- Exploring desired housing options
- Planning for desired end of life care
- Completing appropriate legal documents

If you would like to speak with an Options Counselor, an Assessment Specialist, or a Private Care Manager (or if you need help figuring out which one is right for you), call Springwell at 617-926-4100 and ask to speak with the Information and Consultation Department.

CEO Notes

ceo notes



Massachusetts was one of the first states in the nation to establish a statewide home care program. The MA Home Care Program, managed through a network of 25 non-profit organizations, including Springwell, provides care management and in-home support services to help eligible seniors in Massachusetts successfully age in place. Eligibility for the Home Care Program is based on age, residence, income, and ability to carry out daily tasks such as bathing, dressing, and meal preparation. In 2017, the income eligibility for the program expanded. While there has always been an income-based cost-sharing mechanism for participants in the Home Care Program, there used to be a cap on who could participate in the program based on income or the presence of a caregiver in the home. Now, even those without a caregiver who fall above the income cap on the core program can participate. Over-income participants gain access to the professional case management services of organizations like Springwell, as well as our extensive vendor network, while paying for in-home services on a sliding scale. If you have questions about whether or not the MA Home Care Program can be of help to you or a family member, please call Springwell at 617-926-4100 to arrange an in-home assessment.

-Trish Smith, Springwell CEO

Emergency Back-up Planning: Springwell Can Help

emergency planning

According to a recent Family Caregiver Survey by Caregiving.com, “74% of respondents say they do not have a back-up or a trained back-up to provide care in their absence if they become ill, have an emergency or want to take a vacation”.

Jo White, Springwell’s Director of Health Partnerships shares that finding a caregiver on short notice can be challenging, so planning ahead helps to assure that your loved one receives the care that they need. While Springwell does not provide emergency services and does not have 24/7 staff coverage, there are many ways we can help you make a plan.

One option is to establish a relationship with a Springwell Private Care Manager (PCM). A PCM can help connect you with a home care agency that would be available for emergency care. It can be valuable to utilize that home care agency for a respite break a couple of afternoons a week so that the care recipient is familiar with the organization and, further, Jo adds that this twice weekly break will likely be healthy for the caregiver and reduce the risk of the caregiver getting ill. Springwell’s Private Care Management program is the only one in the area connected to state subsidized home care agencies.

Waiting for a crisis could leave a loved one without care if the caregiver is ill or injured. Make a plan, write it down with contact phone numbers and make it easily accessible for emergency responders, another family member, friend, or neighbor.

Contact Springwell at 617-926-4100 to reach our Private Care Managers or our Information and Consultation Department.



Don’t have an emergency plan for yourself or a loved one? Springwell has resources that can help.

“It is a privilege to help people plan for the outcome that is important to them.”

Elder Independence Fund: Filling the Gaps

elder independence



When a chronic health condition unexpectedly landed Ana (left) in a nursing facility, it took persistence and the dedication of a Springwell team, led by Community Discharge Planner, Stephanie (right) to help her get home.

Ana is a friendly, optimistic woman with a heartwarming smile and bright eyes. But even Ana got discouraged when chronic health challenges landed her in a nursing home after a hospital stay for an urgent medical condition. Her chronic issues don't require nursing home care but do make some help necessary for her to live at home. Sometimes health is the major barrier to returning home, but in Ana's case a maze-like process that included many dead ends and staff turnover at the nursing home resulted in frustration. Finally, a new social worker at her facility connected her with Springwell. With lots of patience and the help of caring professionals, Ana made it through the maze and found the door to home.

Springwell's registered nurses and social workers, with the backing of our experienced multi-disciplinary staff, have expertise in all aspects of the support that is necessary to move out of a nursing facility. Stephanie, a Community Discharge Planner, initially met with Ana to weigh the pros and cons of leaving or staying. It was clear that Ana wanted to go home and that it was medically manageable. With the exception of climbing stairs, she was mobile and she very much wanted to resume her life in the community. Stephanie set out to help Ana reach her goal. With Stephanie's support, Ana applied to several local housing authorities and identified and arranged for the program supports that she would need to live independently.

About two years after moving into the nursing facility, the good news finally came that an accessible apartment was available for

Ana. In September, with support from family and Springwell, Ana happily moved to her new home. Ana's enrollment in ongoing programs was essential, but, as is typical, it did not cover all of the costs associated with a move. A grant from Springwell's Elder Independence Fund provided her with two items that made a world of difference at the end of a very long road: a new bed for her apartment and a blood pressure cuff so that she can monitor a key health issue. Funded entirely by private donations, the Elder Independence Fund allows Springwell staff to provide seniors and caregivers with help they need to alleviate their distress, maintain their independence, and improve their quality of life. Ana's loving adult children and grandchild visit often, and with the help of ongoing Springwell services, Ana gets the care she needs and lives her life safely in the comfort of her own home.

Gifts to support the Elder Independence Fund can be made using the enclosed envelope, or by visiting our secure online donation site at: www.springwell.com/donate



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Springwell and its programs are funded in part by contracts with or grants from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs and the Federal Administration for Community Living. Springwell is a local Area Agency on Aging and is a member of the Massachusetts Home Care Association.

Solutions in Support of Health and Independence

Springwell is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to helping people who need long-term services and supports to remain independent and healthy in the setting of their choice.

Services are made possible in part by contracts with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs, MassHealth, contracts with insurance and health care providers, and also through the generosity of individuals and institutions that provide critical philanthropic support.