

Area Agencies on Aging

In Action

February 2010



At 58, Carol had a stroke. Unable to walk, she lost her job at a warehouse near Cincinnati and lost her home, too. “I had nothing,” Carol said. “I didn’t want to move in with my kids. I didn’t want them to take care of me. It was embarrassing.”

Carol moved into a nursing facility, but could not fathom staying there forever. When she heard about the option of receiving care at home, her obstacles seemed insurmountable. She had serious disabilities, no home, few possessions, no bank account, and would need help with bathing and housework. She learned that the PASSPORT program of the Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio could surmount these obstacles, but a waiting list existed due to state budget cuts.

Home First provided a solution. This state law allows Medicaid-eligible nursing facility residents to bypass waiting lists and enroll in home and community care programs. It was, Carol said, “a pure miracle. It gets you your life back.”

Carol also received help through a federal grant administered by the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services. She now lives in an apartment, where she can enjoy visits from her six grandchildren. Her care manager arranged PASSPORT services, including an emergency response device, Meals on Wheels, and the help of an aide three times a week. The Access bus provides transportation.

Carol struggles to get back on her feet as she undergoes physical therapy. “I’m doing things I haven’t been able to do in five years. I’ll probably never be the same, but I’m going to be a volunteer some day at a hospital. I know I’m still good for something.”

Carol’s PASSPORT care plan costs \$10,118 annually. This is an annual Medicaid savings of \$46,374 when compared to the average of \$56,492* for skilled nursing facility care.

*Estimated in 2009, not offset by client liability and not including Medicaid care services

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