

Anne's Story

I have had a long and, at times, difficult life. I was born 66 years ago in a small town in Tennessee and moved to Massachusetts when I was 17. I raised two children as a single mother and worked as a home health aide until I had a stroke several years ago. All of my children and grandchildren live in the Carolinas. My closest relationship was with my sister, but she died last year. I am Pentecostal and rely on my faith during these difficult times.

I've had a variety of health problems for many years. I have been diabetic for most of my adult life and had to have my left leg amputated below my knee. As a result, I've had a loss of mobility and require a wheelchair to get around. I also have to go to dialysis three days a week, which I don't like because the people there don't treat me very well. I recently had a heart attack, and now have chronic heart problems.

What is Important to Anne:

- Socializing with friends and being a part of the community/church
- Stability for the future
- Accessible living space

I lost much of my support system when my sister died. As a result, I moved in with my niece, who lives in a small town. My finances are tight since I'm renting a room from her. I don't like having to depend on others, so I spend most of my time in my room, worrying about being a bother and how my many needs are going to be met. I feel lonely, don't get out much, and I no longer have any hope for the future.

Integrating Long-Term Services and Supports

My interdisciplinary team (IDT) met with me in my home to review my health, medications, and personal priorities. They wrote a comprehensive care plan based on my preferences.

Our focus initially was to establish a new support system; the team helped me meet new friends, access transportation to attend a new church, and connected me with a bereavement group. I now attend an adult day program 2 or 3 days a week, where I am beginning to make new friends. My food stamps were re-established, and I now have access to home-delivered meals five times a week. I also began to receive in-home help for personal care and basic housekeeping several days a week.

I received education to better manage my diabetes and improve my diet. I am also going to a new dialysis center, which I like much more. I was provided a CPAP mask and trained in its use to help treat my sleep apnea. I rely on pain pills to deal with the pain from my amputation. Once my life is settled a bit, I have agreed to reduce my pain medication and learn some strategies to control my pain. I worked with a community health worker to visit affordable and accessible housing settings, and am now on waiting lists for a subsidized apartment.

The Impact of Long-Term Services and Supports on Anne's Life

I'm still lonely because I miss my sister, and my children and grandkids live far away and I can't see them very often. However, I feel like I have more support from my care team, and I am engaging in more social activities through various community supports. I'm less anxious now, which I think is because I don't have to worry about my finances and have access to the food I need to be healthier. I'm still waiting for an accessible apartment I can afford, but I'm hopeful it will come along soon. It's a slow process, but I have some hope now.

*Disclaimer: Names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.
You can find additional resources regarding the Disability-Competent Care Model [here](#).*