

November 6, 2005

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Everyday I marvel at the help given to us by Andrea Nathanson and her brilliant team at Qualicare. It has been nearly a year since they first came into our lives. At that time my husband Adrian was nearing the end of his third month of convalescence. He has chronic progressive M.S. and had suffered a very serious injury to his brain as the result of a fall. He was scheduled to return home from Bridgepoint Health Centre, if only we could figure out the logistics of how he would manage life in a house that was no longer appropriate for his needs and how we would continue rehabilitation and manage care at home. I had consulted with CCAC, with housing and accessibility experts, doctors, occupational therapists, and homecare providers. Everyone had suggestions and some answers, but no one seemed able to comprehend the full picture in order to help me organize things adequately for my husband's homecoming. I knew that if we were not well prepared by December 9th, he would have to remain at Bridgepoint in a special unit for people who did not have proper care available at home.

I was determined to figure this out, and when I was given Andrea Nathanson's phone number I called her immediately. Our first conversation lifted my spirits; I could tell by her confident and caring tone and by her clear questions and well informed answers that she would be able to help us find a way. Again and again over the past year, my first impression of Andrea Nathanson has proven to be right. As a highly experienced registered nurse, she knows how to coordinate a wide range of services and provide outstanding care in a home setting for people with urgent medical needs.

In the week that followed our first conversation, Andrea provided advocacy and strategies at the residential rehabilitation centre as my husband's discharge was expedited. Her team moved ahead quickly to arrange some small but key renovations (done by Easy Access) to the downstairs of our home. Andrea coordinated with CCAC to provide all services to which we were entitled. Following this, a hospital bed and other necessary equipment were delivered and set up so that my husband had a hospital-at-home. Furniture was re-organized for safety, technical support was provided by Ken Daniels so that my husband could now sit at a desk and work at his computer in the living room area not far from his bedside. Andrea arranged for additional equipment that was not provided by CCAC, so that my husband would be safe and comfortable as he gradually regained independence and resumed some of his academic work.

In her role as Adrian's nurse, Andrea organized medications, spoke with doctors, arranged for and attended medical appointments. She kept clear medical files so that each doctor had immediate access to all necessary information. Andrea strategized and implemented a homecare plan, which she supervised very closely. The plan included the services of Arlene Banday, an outstanding live-in caregiver, for the first several months. Both during and after that initial period, Andrea and Arlene were available to assist us

when emergencies arose. They continued to be attentive and dedicated to helping my husband and teaching us both how to handle a range of complex medical situations.

Andrea coordinated follow-up meetings with our family and maintained regular contact with us well past the time when Adrian no longer required live-in care. She generously agreed to be on call when I was at work, sometimes late into the evenings when I was teaching night classes. During that period she continued, when asked, to accompany Adrian to appointments with doctors. Andrea's knowledge of medical language was a big help. She was able to report details to the doctors with great accuracy and to translate and interpret medical reports and information for Adrian, for me, and for the family when necessary.

Later, when Adrian gained strength and returned to better health, Andrea helped us understand how we might approach our insurance companies in order to claim the benefits to which we are entitled, including some nursing care and some nursing supervised care. These negotiations have proven to be quite complex and are still in progress.

I am certain that without the wise and gentle nursing care provided by Andrea Nathanson and without the superb services provided by all members of her team, my husband's recovery would not have been as complete. He is now back to his independent self, and he still benefits on a daily basis from the skills and knowledge he gained during his beautifully supervised period of recovery.

I will be forever grateful for Andrea Nathanson's superlative support and care during the most difficult year of our life, and I am secure in the knowledge that if and when we need help again, Andrea and her team will be there for us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Esther L. Fine".

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