



Finding Guidance through our Healthcare Maze

by Michel Brabant

It used to be that you could count on family doctors to provide that extra care and guidance needed. But today everyone seems so occupied and at capacity, that it is easy to feel overwhelmed and confused. With all the talk about improving our healthcare system, I can't help feeling that the discussion isn't doing any good. For those of us who need help now, there doesn't seem to be anywhere to turn.

I worried that I might feel this way if I was to encounter a serious illness or medical crisis. Even without a crisis, every doctor appears to have a new plan without recognition of the direction from any previous doctor. Would it be too unreasonable to think that my family and I should be able to receive ongoing guidance or, perhaps, consistency of care when we encounter an illness or are experiencing a health crisis? There are plenty of choices when we need help with our finances and the like. But when we need guidance through the healthcare maze, it seems like we're all alone!

The stress of aging and dealing with a healthcare issue is huge! With all the doctors, specialists and programs, the responsibilities of managing the care required is very difficult. In fact, you could use a medical degree yourself to understand it all. It would be great to have someone take you by the hand and guide you through the healthcare maze providing the direction and emotional support needed to feel more in control.

A Solution?

A company exists in the Greater Toronto Area to do just that! Qualicare has an approach that is truly innovative and greatly needed. Qualicare helps by speaking up for your interests and makes difficult times as positive and nurturing as possible. They offer their clients case-managed care by helping them deal with the many issues and daunting tasks that family members find to be a challenge. Their staff has the experience and training to understand and deal with all the serious and complex responsibilities involved. Also, they have the compassion to listen, understand and support patients and their families.

Qualicare uses Personal Care Managers who are registered nurses. They help establish short and long-term care goals. They provide case management and advocacy work on behalf of families and their loved ones. Personal care options are investigated, evaluated and plans are developed by personalizing care that complements our healthcare system. It also considers family, or household members, and creates a tailored solution to fit the needs of individuals.

Qualicare has the ability to navigate a complex healthcare system. Their staff creates and maintains detailed, personalized health resumes and attends to all the physical and administrative needs of patients, in accordance to their special care situations. Their motto '*we'll take care of everything*' means that families can focus on providing the love, attention and time that they want to give, rather than expending all their energy on providing care that is all too often difficult. Especially in the event of setting up true

'hospital at home' environments for patients that sometimes are inappropriate for family members to provide.

By getting professional assistance, the potential for receiving the best possible care is much higher and subsequently, the risks are lower.

Why Pay?

The idea of paying someone to be your health care guidance counsellor makes a lot of sense to me. People today hire everyone from wedding planners and interior decorators, to accountants because they need help in these areas where personal expertise is lacking. Canadians feel entitled to free healthcare but in reality, according to the Canada Health Act, the only thing free is that which is 'medically necessary'. Unfortunately, what is medically necessary is up for debate. So while you're suffering, the politicians and healthcare advisors are arguing!

Single Point-of-Contact

Where do you go? Who do you trust? How can you save money? How do you eliminate frustration? By providing guidance, products and services that make it easy to respond to these questions, Qualicare offers a 'full continuum' of care. On any healthcare journey many things change on a regular basis, such as your blood pressure, your body temperature, or your doctor. But it may also be as complex as your medication regime, your emotional stability or your living arrangements.

Your Personal Care Manager develops a unique understanding of your situation. They offer the advantage of being able to provide services throughout the progression of an illness, or over time as their clients age.

Avoiding a Crisis

Qualicare takes care of the stress so families have the peace of mind knowing their loved ones are cared for. Take Mrs. Samuels, who is 81 and overwhelmed with her health challenges. Feeling alone and afraid, despite the fact that she has a live-in caregiver, she regularly calls her son for help and reassurance. Although he is a loving and caring son, he isn't always available and doesn't feel equipped to answer her questions. He began to feel overwhelmed from her ever-increasing care and the complexity that was developing. He called Qualicare.

"They accompany me to doctors appointments, help me understand my medications, investigate options and help guide me to make the decisions that I feel comfortable with, instead of always worrying whether I made the right choice. Now I feel better," says Mrs. Samuels.

Today, Mrs. Samuels still lives at home and has avoided several crises by using the Qualicare services. Clients are closely monitored and help is a phone call away, 24 hours a day. If you would like to find out more about Qualicare, call 416-628-7449 or visit their web site at www.qualicare.ca.