

# HEALTHIER FOR LOVED ONES TO STAY AT HOME

Text: Toby Kraman

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Four superbugs are rampant in Canadian hospitals right now, and thousands have died this past year. Our focus is to protect our patients and keep them out of hospital or as safe as possible

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says Andrea Nathanson, a registered nurse with over 20 years experience in healthcare, and executive director of Qualicare, an innovative service dedicated to personal health care management. “The dream of hospital being a ‘safe place’ is a myth; home is where you’re safe,” according to Nathanson.

“If superbugs aren’t enough, people are not being looked after properly. One hospital nurse looks after 40 people, and it’s not the same nurse the next night. There’s no continuity and very little teamwork among caregivers,” warns Nathanson. “In the last three and a half years Qualicare has succeeded in keeping many seniors out of hospital and away from infection and deterioration. We provide the essential care they need at home, supplementing government services at reasonable cost to our clients”.

A good example of this is Sam. \* Sam is ninety-two years of age living with his daughter and her family and suffers from congestive heart failure. In and out of hospital, his loved ones were at a loss for a way to cope. Doctors would send him to hospital when his lungs would fill with fluid and there they would try to drain him out. The problem as with many advanced in age is that the hospital environment induced temporary dementia – confusion, agitation, inability to sleep, refusal to eat etc., and what should have been a short admission would last three weeks. “Families can’t handle it. Sam’s family asked me if they should move him into a nursing home. I told them ‘no way. Get him home and with our help in a few days he’ll be back to normal’.”

“Our personal care team established fluid status monitoring for Sam at home where a nurse would check him with a stethoscope, along with a daily regimen of observing his weight, fluid restriction, and administration of medications. A day came when his lungs were filling with liquid, and Sam’s doctor told his family to take him right to hospital.

We spoke to the doctor, knowing Sam’s situation and asked if we might try giving him an extra half dose of his diuretic pill to see if that might bring down the fluid levels. The next morning he was fine.

Since we began working with Sam on January 20th of this year, Qualicare has prevented him from having to endure hospitalizations four times,” relates Nathanson.

\* name has been changed

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