

Neillsville woman credits Security Health Plan as her ‘lifeline’ after husband suffers stroke

“I found a lifeline in the last place I expected to find it, at Security Health Plan,” Neillsville retired teacher Becky McKevitt said on a rainy April afternoon.

McKevitt sat at her kitchen table alongside her husband Brian, who had recently returned home after suffering two strokes, and Security Health Plan Care Manager Karen Taylor.

Taylor reached out to Becky in March after Brian’s release from the hospital to offer care management services to the Neillsville couple. Taylor said the McKevitts went through a “health nightmare” that began on Jan. 15.



Initially, Brian was admitted to Marshfield Medical Center – Neillsville with an abnormal heart rhythm that can often be treated with medication, but that wasn’t the case for Brian. He developed a blood clot in his brain, and suffered a stroke. Brian was transported by helicopter to another hospital where surgeons removed the clot. He had some minor difficulty with his speech after the surgery but otherwise suffered minimal ill effects. He was discharged from the hospital on Jan. 21 and returned home.

Unfortunately Brian’s abnormal heart rhythm continued to cause problems for him and he was hospitalized again just days later with congestive heart failure. He was stabilized and discharged on Jan. 26 to resume his speech therapy and start participating in the Marshfield Clinic Health System’s Heart Failure Clinic.

On Feb. 14 Brian had a headache, became dizzy, collapsed and Becky found him on the floor. He was admitted to Marshfield Medical Center and diagnosed with a brain bleed, another type of stroke. He recovered from that

stroke too, and on March 3 he was transferred to the Marshfield Hospital Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit where he participated in physical, occupational and speech therapies until he was able to return home on March 27. During nearly three months of acute health issues, Brian was admitted to four different hospitals in order to receive the care he urgently needed. Brian is now home with his wife Becky, their daughter and grandchildren whom Brian and Becky care for during the day. Brian is physically able to care for himself, and Becky keeps a close eye on him to ensure he remains safe.

Becky said when she left rehab with Brian everyone asked her, "Are you ready for this?" She said all she could think was, "What else can I do?"

"I thought I could handle it. I thought I was ready," she said.

But caring for her husband, on top of the daily childcare she provides her two young grandchildren quickly became too much for her to handle and she felt overwhelmed.

"I was having such an awful day," Becky recalled. "I was so happy and thankful to have Brian home, but coping with his memory loss hit me harder than I expected. I felt alone. I was overwhelmed and didn't think I could do it. Then the phone rang."

Taylor was on the other end.

"She instantly put me at ease," Becky said. "She reassured me that things were going to be taken care of claim-wise. I was worried we'd be put into thousands and thousands of dollars of debt, but Karen eased my concerns.

Becky said she wasn't even aware of the care management services at Security Health Plan until Taylor contacted her.

"As a nurse, I am invited into people's lives when they are most vulnerable," Taylor said. "I feel it is an honor. I am sorry they need me and my services but I am happy to be there for them."

Taylor said many people think a nurse care manager helps people learn about

their diseases, drugs or treatment they need. She said that is what she thought her position was when she first started working for Security Health Plan two years ago.

"I have since learned that is not the case at all," Taylor said. "What I find most often is that people need help getting through the health care system. So I help them with prior authorizations and understanding their plan benefits. I also help them navigate their care, avoid out of network charges and to communicate with their providers."

Becky said all of that is what she needed and Taylor provided her with that help when she needed it most.

"The caring people here are the reason I recommend Security Health Plan to everyone I talk to," Becky said. "My experience with Security Health Plan has been excellent! I would never change."

Those sentiments led Becky to reach out to Taylor's manager.

"I felt compelled," she said. "I needed to express the excellent and heart-felt job Karen did for me."

She said the compulsion came when she remembered the lesson her parents taught her as a child: If you can't say something kind, don't say anything at all.

"I often quoted my parents' words of advice to numerous high school students, whom I taught over 35 years of teaching," Becky said. "Karen had gone above and beyond her position of nurse care manager. She had touched my heart as well as given me a lifeline at Security Health Plan. The last place I expected to find it."

Taylor said hearing that is a gift.

"It is just very sweet," she said about Becky reaching out to her manager. "It is hard to believe that people have, in their busy lives, time to take for those little things, because it takes time and effort. It is a blessing."