



Testimony Before the Colorado Joint Budget Committee
Robin Bolduc and Bruce Goguen
December 9, 2014

Good evening. My name is Robin Bolduc and I am testifying this evening with my husband Bruce Goguen. My husband and I are empty nesters living in Boulder. Bruce is fully paralyzed and uses a ventilator to breathe as a result of Primary Progress MS. He has been a CDASS participant since the original pilot in about 2005.

CDASS has maintained my husband's health. Bruce employs 5 personal attendants. His "newest" attendant has been with him for one year; she has 30 years of attendant care experience. His other attendants have been with him for 5, 7 and 9 years. Each of his attendants has been trained in meeting the specific needs of my husband. As needs change, attendants receive additional training. In January, Bruce's respiratory therapist will be providing training in the use of an Ambu-bag; which is a type of "manual" ventilator. They will also be receiving updated information on his ventilator settings and a refresher in lung suctioning techniques.

Having consistent staff, trained in Bruce's specific needs is vital in early identification of any medical complication. Bruce's staff know his "normal" condition and can quickly identify any changes in his condition. Recently, he had a minor skin breakdown. His morning attendant quickly brought it to our attention. A wound care nurse was contacted and provided training in treating the wound. Increased staffing was quickly scheduled. Within a few days, the wound was healed and Bruce was back to his usual routine.

CDASS has greatly improved the quality of life for our family. The holidays are a perfect example of the flexibility of scheduling within CDASS. As you know, the holidays mean parties, entertaining, concerts by grandchildren, and other holiday events. In order to be a part of the festivities, Bruce's care often needs to happen at different times. Bruce's attendants also want time to be with their families and friends. At the beginning of each week during these busy months, an email is sent to all of his staff with

Bruce's scheduling needs. Attendants respond with their ability to change or add hours, as well as their need to change or reduce hours.

The agency model of home health care does not work well for Bruce or our family. As a result of nursing shortages, agencies are not able to staff Bruce at the level of care that he needs. Few agencies, if any, are able to provide staff knowledgeable in the care of a person with Bruce's level of disability; especially ventilator care. They are not able to make scheduling changes necessary to accommodate Bruce's changing needs or to allow him to be a part of family and community activities. The staff turnover rate and complex scheduling issues that agencies face does not allow for consistency in staffing.

CDASS provides our family with the flexibility in scheduling that allows us to live "ordinary lives." CDASS provides Bruce with consistent, well-trained staff resulting in stabilization of his medical needs.

Thank you for taking the time to hear our testimony.

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