

COVID - 19 & Care Coordination Organizations



Our Champions III

Care Manager Champions accomplish lifesaving missions daily.

As the coronavirus crisis continues its rampage across the country, the seven Care Coordination Organizations continue to support over 105,000 lives in NY collectively, having joined forces in an unprecedented collaborative effort, ultimately placing each individual in the center of outstanding care.

Providing relief, support and the necessary aid for every individual and their family are often lifesaving missions that only the most stalwart Care Manager can successfully ace.

Communication

A person that **ACA/NY** supports was hospitalized on April 3rd at Brookdale Hospital due to breathing difficulty. This person was accompanied by IRA staff to the hospital, but upon arrival to the emergency room, the staff member was not permitted to enter. An ACA Care Manager and the individual's sister attempted to contact the hospital to get an update but were not successful in reaching anyone. The Care Manager and sister then attempted to reach the individual's doctor, to no avail.

The Care Manager and sister then contacted New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYPLI). A lawyer from NYPLI advocated to the Deputy Commissioner within OPWDD that the guidelines for hospital visits should be changed to allow for staff that support people with I/DD to accompany them if they are hospitalized. On April 6th, OPWDD shared in a written response to the Care Manager that they were working with OPWDD legal counsel, Dept. of Health, provider associations and other key stakeholders in advocacy efforts to allow support staff to be present during hospital admissions for people with I/DD. Last week the NY DOH submitted guidance that support staff for individuals with I/DD are now exempt from visitation restrictions.

Advocacy efforts from Care Managers such as this were critical in changing regulations which will help provide a more comfortable experience for any person unfortunate enough to be hospitalized during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stimulation

A family supported by **Person Centered Services** has had a difficult time keeping a nine-year-old child stimulated during the day. The parents have been working from home due to the pandemic. The boy, who has an autism spectrum disorder, needs special sensory items to stay occupied. The most helpful items the family had were recently broken by accident.

“

The family was blown away...

...this would be a great way to keep him calm...

”

“The family was blown away,” says the Care Coordinator. “Since they can’t take their son to the playground, this will be a great way to keep him happy and calm.”

The Care Coordinators at Person Centered Services are dedicated to helping connect families to the resources they need most throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

Supporting a Member Through a Life Transition

Most individuals with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) require support throughout their lives. Thanks to advancements in medicine, adults with developmental disabilities are living longer and healthier lives.

This means that for individuals with I/DD, whose parents did not want someone else caring for their child, they and their parental care givers are aging in place together. According to the Arc, in the United States alone, nearly 900,000 family caregivers are over the age of 60. And the number of adults with I/DD aged 60 and older is projected to nearly double from 641,860 in 2000 to 1.2 million by 2030.

While most aging caregivers implicitly understand the need for future planning to ensure continuity of care for their adult child with disabilities, the mutually dependent relationships developed from decades of sharing a home make this more of a challenge. It is difficult for the caregiver to bear the thought of no longer caring and advocating for their child, and many older parents also experience sadness of separating from a lifetime of companionship. Separation anxiety is a very real emotion at any age.

Such was the situation of a **Care Design NY** member who lived with her 101-year-old mother. The COVID-19 health crisis disrupted and wreaked havoc for hundreds and thousands of Americans, including this family who Care Design NY supported. The mother immediately became ill and was transported by ambulance to the hospital from the home she shared with her adult daughter with I/DD. She would never return to her home. Overnight, the daughter was separated from the only person who took care of her every need for decades.

Fortunately, the care coordination supports included a line of communication with relatives who notified the Care Manager. She intervened quickly to de-escalate the emergency situation. The Care Manager worked with a provider agency and OPWDD to identify and secure emergency residential placement for the member. The screening process was accelerated, and the woman was accepted into a safe and secure residence with direct support professionals. The Care Manager was also able to quickly intervene and arrange the necessary financial support from Medicaid to pay for her medical and living expenses. The Care Manager's support and intervention made a critical difference for this member to successfully bridge an unsafe living situation to a viable new living arrangement with support.

On A Mission

Care Managers have a complex and all-consuming job. Over the course of their work, each dedicated Care Manager works hard to ensure that no stone is left unturned for his/her individual. When COVID-19 hit, it threw quite a wrench into some ongoing plans. Despite the difficulties, our Care Managers apply their utmost efforts to execute their objectives in the best possible way under the circumstances.

A **Tri-County Care** individual, has been residing at Glen Cove Hospital on social admission by order of the courts after the passing of his guardian. This case was transferred to a very dedicated care manager, Stephany, in March 2020. From the moment this individual was assigned to Stephany, she diligently worked to find appropriate residential placement for him. When COVID-19 hit New York State, his hospital social worker informed Stephany that the hospital would like to move the individual somewhere else due to the pandemic.

As the individual was not yet waiver enrolled, Stephany communicated with the local Developmental Disabilities Regional Office (DDRO) requesting them to expedite the individual's waiver application and was successful! Stephany quickly referred the individual to a Temporary Emergency Respite Opportunity but he wasn't a good candidate for that service since he did not reside in an IRA. Per protocol, Stephany completed a Crisis Referral form for the individual so the DDRO could follow his case closely. She then sought out a Crisis Respite provider to accept the individual while working closely with the hospital. Because the individual was placed at the hospital by the court order, they could not remove him without consent of the court. Stephany, along with the hospital's social worker, used different approaches, opportunities and resources to reach their main objective: placing the individual in a safe environment.

Upon testing negative for COVID-19, the individual was placed aboard the ship at Jacob Javits Center. The Care Manager was advised that the individual needed placement ASAP due to his negative COVID-19 status. Hearing this, Stephany placed her entire focus into seeking respite for the individual, applying, calling, reaching out, giving her all for someone in need. Stephany finally succeeded in finding the individual a Crisis Respite agency!

Stephany continued assisting the individual to prepare him for the transfer. She gathered all essentials for the individual prior to moving to the IRA, such as his diabetes protocol, 90 days medication supplies etc. The individual has officially moved into a certified IRA on April 13, 2020!

**Stephany
used different
approaches
to reach the
main
objective:
placing the
individual in
a safe
environment.**

Solutions on a Budget

There is no doubt that the pandemic we are all currently experiencing is unprecedented, and every person had to adjust to it in their own ways. However, perhaps there is no greater lifestyle adjustment than there is for the individuals our dedicated Care Managers provide for every day.

Tiera, a Care Manager at **Prime Care Coordination**, has been assisting a parent of an individual afflicted with Cerebral Palsy. This individual had difficulty closing the front door to her home as she exited and needed a cost-effective, time-sensitive solution to a huge safety concern. The parent was seeking an e-modification to have an auto-electronic closing door installed. The family was given a quote of \$2,500 for the installation, but with financial strains and a pandemic upon them, it did not seem feasible.

That is when Tiera, the Care Manager, stepped up to the plate.

She sourced and forwarded YouTube videos and links on DIY tension hinge installation, a fix that would provide the same effect as an auto-electronic closing door. An inexpensive and timely solution was provided for a family in need.

With support from a willing and dedicated Care Manager, this parent was able to provide safety and peace of mind for her family during an uncertain period in their lives.



Food Sourcing

This story is about a **Southern Tier** member who does not usually reach out of her own accord for help. The fact that she did was quite surprising to her Care Manager. She is very independent, lives with her boyfriend and child and is expecting a baby in July. She was running very low on food and didn't have any money or Food Stamps left to get more. Her boyfriend was working by day, and with a 1 year old child, she rightfully did not want to risk exposure to the coronavirus by going to the food bank.

Hearing all this, the Care Manager reached out to the local food pantry to inquire about delivery in these circumstances, but they were only delivering to elderly people due to the shortage of volunteers. The Care Manager then got approval from her superiors to call in with an order and it was prepared ahead at the food pantry.

Using PPE and hygiene precautions, the Care Manager picked it up and dropped it off at the member's door step. As the Care Manager drove off, an image of the member and her daughter waving their thanks reflected in her rearview mirror.

*Daphne, a **LIFEPlan** Care Manager, was particularly worried when she was speaking to the mom of a member on her caseload. While they were going through the questions on the Member Monitoring Tool, Daphne learned from the mom that the family had a limited supply of food. With her children being home from school, the Mom explained that she was depleting her food resources more rapidly than she could plan for. Daphne knew this family well and was worried she would be reluctant to access food from a food pantry, especially because the family had some significant dietary restrictions.*

Daphne talked to her and worked on a plan to obtain more food. Daphne shared with the mom that other people are facing similar challenging circumstances as they manage through this crisis. They used the newly developed community resource tool to consider several food resources in the community, including a local church she knew, and some food pantries. Daphne was able to find a mobile food pantry that was open the next day. This pantry did not require ID or proof of income, which made the mom feel more comfortable. Daphne helped her feel more relaxed about her needs, and the mom was able to go pick up a box of food to manage until they had the resources to visit the grocery store.



ACA/NY
www.acany.org
1-833-692-2269



Care Design NY
www.caredesignny.org
1-518-235-1888



LIFEPlan CCO Ny
www.lifeplanccony.com
1-315-565-2612



Person Centered Services
www.personcenteredservices.com
1-888-977-7030



Prime Care Coordination
www.primecareny.org
1-844-347-3168



Southern Tier Connect
www.southerntierconnect.org
1-607-376-7526



Tri-County Care
www.tricountycare.org
1-844-504-8400