



Northern Community Mediation

Where The Solution Is Up To You

Serving Charlevoix
and Emmet Counties

September 24, 2015

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP

Dear NAME:

Well into their eighties, Martha and George have been married for over sixty years. They live in a mobile home in rural, northern Michigan. They have eight sons, all of whom live out of state.

Martha is diabetic and has slight dementia. Following a recent stroke, she was hospitalized and then entered into a rehabilitation facility. The staff at the facility recommended that she remain in the rehabilitation facility, but both George and Martha wanted to be in their own home.

From the perspective of the staff at the rehab facility, the fact that Martha is dependent upon a wheelchair is a challenge. She needs help bathing, taking her medications, and tending to her daily needs. Since George also has physical limitations, the staff questioned his ability to care for her. Therefore, they contacted the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

According to George and Martha, the findings of DHHS contained falsehoods and distortions. For example, DHHS saw that in the refrigerator there was ice cream, something Martha was not supposed to have. From Martha and George's perspective, DHHS failed to grasp the fact that the ice cream was for George.

Yet, DHHS insisted that George and Martha could not take care of themselves. Consequently, the case went to court. The son from Wisconsin was in the courtroom the day of the hearing and accepted the Judge's temporary order of guardianship of his parents. The judge also ordered the case to mediation.

Present at mediation were George, Martha, Martha's attorney, the son from Wisconsin, and the representative from DHHS. During mediation, George and Martha were able to express their fears. They expressed that they do not object to being in a care facility as long as they can be together. The result of the mediation was that the son from Wisconsin would be the permanent guardian. George would continue to care for Martha with both the physical and financial help from DHHS. Addressing the issue of George and Martha's ultimately being together in a care facility, the attorney was to investigate the possibility that the Veteran's Administration would cover his costs, and Martha's costs would be covered by DHHS.

This agreement came about because the involved parties sat down together, expressed their feelings and concerns, and then together worked on coming up with a solution. This is the type of service that Northern Community Mediation provides. This case study exemplifies why Northern Community Mediation has an annual, donor campaign. Please, consider a donation to our organization so that we can continue to offer quality services at no or a minimal cost to each and every person who seeks our help. Thank you.

Sincerely

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