

ICANN Cancer Older People and Advocacy Project Story

My client had been referred by his sister whom he felt that he could benefit from the cancer advocacy service as she felt that he was isolated and now particularly vulnerable as it was established that his cancer of the lungs and bowel was terminal. I met with Jamie at his property and ensured that I listened to what he considered his needs to be. We discussed all the various areas of his life including his cancer. This allowed Jamie to speak to me more openly about his changing needs and anxieties. Together we were able to establish the different areas of his life that are currently impacting him. An example being that due to his illness he was unable to maintain his property and unable to carry out daily essential tasks like doing the laundry. Prior to me being involved social services had refused to assist my client as they considered his property unsuitable for staff to work in as he was a heavy smoker. I was able to source Jamie with an alternative cleaning company which still met his needs and through discussions we were able to come to a resolution as he agreed not to smoke whilst they attended and agreed to open the windows.

Another example was Jamie's plummeting weight which was a great concern with his consultant also. Due to his lung cancer he is unable to consume solids and when I met him he was sustaining himself on a diet of soups which failed to meet his calorie needs. We agreed that we would look at alternative more nutritious and filling foods that not only increased his calorie count but also gave him more variety. We had a joint visit at the local supermarket where I was able to offer him new suggestions. As a result Jamie has now increased his weight and is making steady progress. This is now allowing him to have a little more energy and at present gives him a better quality of life.

Jamie also has learning needs, as he is unable to read and write. This has had an impact when he has had medical appointments particularly at the hospital. I am now currently attending and supporting Jamie with his medical appointments to ensure that not only does he feel less isolated but understands the information he is being told and feels more able to ask appropriate questions concerning his health and wellbeing.