



Case Study – Personal Care Services

Thelma needed help to care for her husband who had Parkinson's disease and other serious medical conditions. After repeatedly being let down by unreliable and inept care assistants she had all but given up trying to find a provider she could trust – until she was recommended to PerCurra. This is Thelma's story.

"I was determined to keep Derek at home through his illness and somehow I managed. It's amazing what you can do when you have to. As his health got worse I knew I needed help but it was very hard to take that first step of inviting carers into our home. I felt it was my job and responsibility to care for my husband and having someone else do those things seemed like an invasion of our privacy. But there comes a time when you simply have to accept that you need assistance. Having made that difficult decision, it was upsetting to find that the people supposed to be helping us were constantly letting us down. They were due at 8am to get Derek out of bed, washed and dressed, but usually just turned up when they liked. By the time they arrived, at about 11am, I had done everything myself. I cancelled the service and carried on trying to manage by myself.

We moved to a different area and made things as easy as possible in our new home by installing equipment such as a hoist by the bed and easy bathing facilities. But still, I found it exhausting. Our Social Worker and our Doctor could see how hard it was for me to cope. They said I had to have someone but then we found it was difficult to get people to come out to our village. The Social Worker managed to find a company that would come out but while some of the team were excellent, others were terrible. They just didn't have a clue what to do. Although it was difficult for me to look after Derek myself it was actually less stressful for me to do it alone than it was to cope with bad carer assistants.

Then my Social Worker found PerCurra – what a difference! My family noticed a dramatic change. Having professionals come in who I could rely on relieved so much of the pressure. They always arrived on time and understood exactly what they had to do. It was a huge burden off me physically and emotionally. We had two people come in twice a day. They got Derek ready in the morning and settled him each evening. The Care Assistants were very welcome in our home and became our friends. When they came in they would go straight to Derek to say hello and they made him feel special. He was very relaxed with them. I felt I could trust them completely to look after him properly - they didn't ever rush. Once the Percurra team had settled Derek in bed for the evening I could sit with him and we would enjoy each other's company because I wasn't exhausted like I had been before.

Despite Derek being seriously ill he was very calm and he never complained. He was very happy with the PerCurra team and had a laugh and a joke with them. If I had only had this wonderful team when I first needed help our lives would have been so much easier and happier. Derek and I had a wonderful marriage and when he became ill I wanted to make things as comfortable as possible for him. Every day he told me that he loved me, even on the day he died.

In the last few days of his life the Care Assistants seemed to know the end was close and they were especially kind and gentle. Even the hospice nurse remarked on this. I can't speak highly enough of everyone in the PerCurra team who made such a difference to our last days together."

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