

Straight from the Source

What Kendal at Home Members Have to Say



KENDAL[®] *at Home*
Together, transforming the experience of aging.[®]

A photograph of three women sitting on a wooden bench in a lush, green forest. The woman on the left is younger with long blonde hair, wearing a white and black striped vest over a white top and white pants. The woman in the middle is older with short white hair, wearing a beige sweater and blue jeans, and is smiling while holding a small object. The woman on the right is younger with blonde hair tied back, wearing a brown sweater and blue jeans, and is also smiling. They are all wearing backpacks and appear to be on a hike. The background is filled with dense green foliage and trees.

Hear about Kendal at Home straight from those who have experienced it.

Here, we share stories and interviews from members of Kendal at Home and their adult children.

SALLY'S STORY

Recovering the Right Way with Kendal at Home

Most people look forward to retirement to spend more time with their children, grandchildren, and friends or to pursue hobbies they didn't have time for before, or make travel plans. But as Sally learned, we may also face health and financial challenges that can derail our plans.

Sally had open-heart surgery followed by complications. "It was actually the caregiver who told me I was in trouble and that I needed medical help immediately. [They] got me back down to the clinic. I was then very open to advice. I was very, very weak and I could not do much on my own at all, so I was very dependent on my caregivers who came to the house and helped me with everything."

"None of us know the future. None of us know what is going to happen. Nobody knows what needs they are going to have. I don't know what I would have done without Kendal at Home."

As a member of Kendal at Home, Sally not only had the advice and support of a personal care coordinator, but access to quality, professional providers that were able to help her every step of the way.



Sally, Kendal at Home Member

THE ROLE OF THE CARE COORDINATOR

Kendal at Home's Care Coordinators are there to help you age successfully in your own home. Traditionally, Sally would have been on her own for making all of her post-care decisions, such as choosing equipment, finding an agency, and dealing with strangers. "You can't put a cost factor to that," Sally says. "I was in no state to handle that, and I think it would have been a horrendous task for our children." Kendal at Home helps relieve the burden of care from your loved ones.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

It is often better to plan for your future needs now when you're well, rather than to grasp at straws when you're in crisis. Sally learned first-hand how important it is to have a plan in place. As an independent and active person, she thought she could manage recovery well enough on her own. Still, Sally took the advice of her personal care coordinator and accepted some expert in-home assistance. Good thing, too, since post-surgical complications arose.

"I told Kendal at Home some months later if it ever needed someone to speak for it, I would be happy to because I had experienced what it is you always think is going to be 'down the road,'" Sally says. "It wasn't down the road for me."

MAGGIE'S STORY

Finding Relief at Kendal at Home for Your Parents

It has been more than five years since Maggie Calkins' parents decided to join Kendal at Home.

“Because they didn’t need any services right away, it was an investment they were making for the future, it made it easier,” Maggie says.

It was clear that her father wanted to stay in his home for the rest of his life. Because he had suffered a few small strokes that resulted in dementia, her mother knew that, at some point, it would be more than she could manage, especially with her own orthopedic issues.

“Dad was concerned that someone would be sitting around the house doing nothing all day, and he didn’t want constant questions bothering him while he still had work to do,” Maggie says.

“We talked to our care coordinator and agreed to one person coming in for two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening to help my dad get up in the morning and go to bed at night, plus dinner.” He was also concerned about what this person would cook for him,



Ann & Hugh, Maggie's Parents

so he suggested food be brought over, and the problem was solved. “By talking about what my dad’s concerns were and then discussing them, it eased his discomfort,” Maggie says.

“His care coordinator found the right person and told her what my dad wanted and didn’t want. Her responsiveness made it a very positive experience,” Maggie says. It made things easier, as the couple’s needs became greater. They then had some temporary help two days a week to help with the laundry, changing the sheets and other light household chores. When they vacationed in Michigan or Florida, Kendal at Home provided seamless services there for the couple. “It made life easier for them,” Maggie says.

Maggie’s father continues to lose functional abilities to transfer in and

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out of bed independently. “He doesn’t understand how to help in a good way, so he throws his weight in the wrong direction, and it is beginning to put strain on the caregivers’ backs,” Maggie says. “We are talking about getting a lift for the bedroom, but you can’t put it on the carpet.” So Maggie and her mother spoke with their care coordinator and agreed to make plans to rip out the carpeting and put in a new floor.

“It is just a matter of talking; we are big on communication,” Maggie says. “They are is great about coming up with suggestions and recommendations.”

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

Care coordinators made the difference for Maggie’s parents. “It was very easy, mostly because of their care coordinator,” Maggie says. “He was so easy to talk to; he listened and gave suggestions but in careful ways.” The couple did not need any services for the first few years, so they simply attended biannual meetings with him so he could make sure everything was going well. But the idea of having a caretaker in his home was unsettling for Maggie’s dad, so her mom came up with a plan for someone to come to the house while she traveled.



Maggie Calkins, Daughter of Kendal at Home Members

PEACE OF MIND

Now that her parents are getting 24-hour care, Maggie rests easy knowing someone is with them all of the time. “They never want to be a burden on their children, not that we would describe it that way,” Maggie says, “but they are taking care of their needs independently.” Kendal at Home makes every situation smooth and easy for everyone involved. “Their care coordinator is so comforting that even when you feel like there is a crisis, he is able to make you come back down and say, ‘There is an issue, but we will deal with it and it will be OK,’” Maggie says. “That level of knowing that it isn’t just a safety net, but he makes things happen so smoothly, it helps your whole state of mind.”

The Adult Child of a Kendal at Home Member

Dear Kendal at Home,

It's always a challenge dealing with aging parents, and even more so when living at a distance. Our positive experience with Kendal at Home helped mitigate the problems of long-distance care. The distance was considerable because my mom lived in Berea, Ohio, and I live in Laramie, Wyoming.

My mom joined Kendal in 2005. She formed good friendships with both her care coordinators. They had fun and informative conversations in getting to know each other, and that helped build a foundation of trust. My mom established a bond with her care coordinators. Later, when serious issues arose, she knew they were always acting in her best interest. She authorized medical personnel to speak about her condition with them. That became especially important when my mom's health started failing in 2007. She had congestive heart failure and suffered two heart attacks and also dealt with COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) and kidney issues. She passed away in January 2008.

My mother's wish was to stay in her home and, thanks to Kendal, she was able to do so until the end. Along the way, her care coordinators were able to arrange for assistive devices and supplemental care, which allowed my mom to stay in her home. It was a slow and gradual evolution of care for my mom. At first, her care coordinators recommended handymen for home repairs from their resource list. Then, they recommended a person to install grab bars in the shower and to install a washer/dryer on the ground level, so my mom wouldn't have to negotiate stairs. They were instrumental in providing regular meals, and to hire help to take out the garbage, do laundry, and take her grocery shopping. In the final phase, they worked with Hospice to bring in oxygen, a transport chair, and a hospital bed. With their good humor and calm logic, they convinced my mom to accept outside services despite her reluctance to have strangers come into her home.

(Continued)


Her care coordinators acted to keep her safe and comfortable in her home by arranging for services I was unable to provide. My mom had an aide round the clock, and, in the end, Hospice was involved. Hospice had the final say in medical care, but they were instrumental in instructing the aides in my mom's palliative care and her daily care.

Her care coordinators visited my mom frequently, and during crises, would be there every day. They gave me progress reports constantly. I visited my mom many times in her last year, and always felt free to share any observations or concerns I had with them. In my absence, they made sure to address those issues and stay on top of the situation. Her care coordination team was always available for my phone calls or emails, and were very prompt in responding. During crises/emergency hospitalizations, they were in constant contact with me. A couple of times, I had questions about certain medications that had been prescribed for my mom. They were often able to explain the rationale for the prescription and any side effects. A couple of times, I voiced my concerns to them, and since they were on the spot, certain regimes were changed due to their intervention based on my requests. Since I wasn't able to be there, I felt they were acting on my behalf to advocate for my mother's care.

Both my mom and I were reassured that Kendal was the best choice for her situation. In my absence, I knew she was being taken care of, and she had the security of knowing that she could stay in her home. Through good communication, I always felt involved in my mom's situation. I had a voice in her care and knew Kendal was always working for her benefit. I feel so grateful for the care and assistance Kendal provided to my mom.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ono Rahel



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it's important to have a secure
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