

Art's MI Health Link Success Story

Art is 67 years old. He worked for over 30 years as a truck driver, farmer, and timber cruiser. Art prefers to live out in the country not far from where he grew up. Art used to hunt but now likes to use binoculars to watch for animals out his living room and kitchen windows. Five bird feeders and a squirrel feeder are in his yard. During the summer, Art puts out hummingbird feeders. Last summer, he put out a feeder of orange slices and grape jelly to attract the Orioles. On some days, Art is able to see deer, rabbits, geese, and turkeys from his house. When Art is watching for birds or wild animals, he likes to talk with his neighbor and friend, Bob. Bob makes the best coffee in the county according to Art. Art's only son and guardian is named John; John has three children. John moved to Alaska five years ago to find work but calls once a week to talk with Art. Art misses his son and his grandchildren a lot. Art doesn't like to talk about it, but years ago he was carjacked in the city. Art has nightmares about that day. Art also doesn't like to talk about his back injury. Art was helping to unload a trailer of timber when the load shifted and a log pinned Art to the ground. Art's injuries required several surgeries and a stay in a nursing facility in order to recover.

Art has depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) related to the carjacking and back injury. Art also has bipolar disorder, painful arthritis, asthma, heart disease, and high blood pressure. Due to his work injuries, surgeries, hospitalization, and nursing home stay, Art has not been as physically active as he used to be and now suffers from obesity.

Art has received services from Community Mental Health for over 30 years. The Community Mental Health case manager knew that if Art wanted to move out of the nursing home back home, that he would need personal care services to help Art manage his living and personal care needs. The Community Mental Health case manager reached out to MI Health Link for assistance. During Art's nursing home stay, a MI Health Link care coordinator visited Art to talk about the MI Health Link program and ask Art about his wishes to return home. The care coordinator wanted to determine what long term care services Art would need and want if he went home.

Art at first did not want to take part in an assessment with the MI Health Link care coordinator. When the care coordinator explained during a conference call to both Art and John about MI Health Link's goal of moving Art home as he wished, with support services from both MI Health Link and Community Mental Health, Art changed his mind and agreed to have the assessment. Art started to

look forward to leaving the nursing home even more knowing that the plans he made would be followed and that he would receive assistance in his own home on days and at times that worked for his daily schedule. The MI Health Link care coordinator arranged conference calls with Art and John regularly to discuss Art's plans for the move and let Art make his own decisions. John fully supported Art's plan. The MI Health Link care coordinator listened to Art talk about what is important to him, what Art needs, and how Art likes to spend his time. The care coordinator listened to John's concerns about Art's move home and explained the services, plans, and back-up plans that Art had developed to address John's concerns. The plan Art made took all of John's concerns and Art's concerns (and needs) into account.

The MI Health Link assessment showed that Art needed personal care services. Art qualified for assistance with laundry and housekeeping too. John, Art, the behavioral health case manager, and the care coordinator for MI Health Link all worked together to identify an in-home caregiver, and develop a care plan. The case manager and MI Health Link care coordinator helped develop a plan for Art to reach his goals for building his strength. Art wanted to be strong enough so that he could walk to his birdfeeders to fill them up.

Art moved home in October of 2017 and receives the additional services he needs. Art, who once had little to no interest in his own care in the nursing facility, now participates in active management of his schedule, appointments, and care goals. Art's MI Health care coordinator helps him make appointments and arrange transportation. Art continues to be very grateful to the MI Health Link program and enjoys speaking with his care coordinator. Art uses his rollator walker and a backpack to get to his birdfeeders and fill them up when they are empty. Art's new goal is to become strong enough to use his walker to get to his neighbor's house for a morning coffee visit.

Art says that MI Health Link services are going 'great'. He has received a much needed shower chair and states that he "feels so much cleaner". Now that Art has a shower chair, he showers more often and doesn't get as tired during the days he has showers. Art is proud that his house is "so clean" now that he has assistance. Art knows that his support services have helped to reduce many of his PTSD symptoms and eased his depression. Art's service worker has cleaned his picture window from the inside and the lens of his binoculars. Art says that these days he can see better and farther when the wild turkeys go to the hay field to peck for worms. Art says that having Community Mental Health and MI Health Link programs working together made his life 'so much easier and better'. John says that being so involved in his father's care made him feel better about his father living alone after leaving the nursing home. Art says that now that he is home again, he is able to feed his birds and squirrels Art has

been a MI Health Link member since August 1, 2017, and says 'he wouldn't change a thing' about his life now.