

'Parents Here; You're There - An Advocate For Their Care'

CARE MANAGE

BY MARTIN LENKOWSKY

Most people go out searching for that extra satisfying job or profession; not Amy Seigel, owner and founder of Advocare. "This work found me," she said.

At the time, Seigel was a Registered Nurse in a local hospital's stroke and neurology department. She identified a glaring need in the healthcare field. "The adult children came to me for advice after a crisis with their parents."

Then one day, the idea really hit her. "A coconut dropped on my head in the hospital parking lot," she said. "Many patients simply fall off the cliff when making the transition from the hospital to home."

Seigel, originally from New York, is both an RN (a UM grad) and a Certified Case Manager. She founded Advocare in 2000, and relocated her company from Fort Lauderdale to Delray Beach in 2011.

Her company motto, "Assess, Advise, Advocate," fits in perfectly with helping families during a crisis and to stay safe and independent. Advocare is a multi-faceted company providing families with complete support with the complexities of illness and aging. Support programs include Medical Care Management, Home Care Management, and



ADVOCARE'S PROFESSIONAL TRI COUNTY CARE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Life Care Planning, helping families find the resources to pay for care to age in place.

"We start with a complete assessment of a patient's health and medical history, home environment, and family situation," Seigel said.

A Nurse Advocate attends key doctor appointments with the client, ensuring that attending physicians obtain a succinct update. Most importantly, the Nurse Advocate assures that medical issues are addressed by the appropriate physician or center of excellence. Family members are kept up to date with the peace of mind that their loved ones are receiving optimal care. Seigel adds, "To top it off, we're on call 24-7."

Client records are stored on their secure computer system so they can jump into action immediately when medical emergencies suddenly arise. This information is quickly and

securely accessible by their Care Manager, even at the ER or hospital.

Families living up north with elderly parents in South Florida often seek the expert services of Advocare to ensure their loved



HOSPITAL ACCOMPANIMENT 24/7



ADVISING ON SENIOR COMMUNITY LIVING OPTIONS

PHOTO BY MELISSA KORMAN

ones are getting the best possible care and treatment. Their certified professionals include 16 Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, and Certified Care Managers. Their Active Aging Program includes an athletic trainer and physical therapist.

Seigel offers a free phone consultation with potential clients to ascertain if she can help. However, she stresses, the most important thing is the face-to-face assessment in their own home, hospital, or a specific rehab center. "A care plan has to be specific and true to who they are and their life's wishes."

Advocare's Director of Life Planning, Jill Poser, explains that they review a client's financial, legal, and family dynamics as part of their multi-faceted approach to elder care. "You need to look at someone's life in its entirety," she said. When it's time to transition from home to assisted living, we help families anticipate every 'what if' so transitions are seamless. We empower our clients to experience their lives in the best, most meaningful ways possible given changing circumstances. We plan for the worst, and hope for the best."

Advocare's Transition Care Management and Life Care Planning Team assists clients to navigate a transition to an independent living, assisted living, or skilled nursing facility, or even to stay at home with new modifications and support. Some of their patients are dealing with memory issues ranging from mild to severe. Seigel said, "Our goal is to help the family cope and help the client preserve quality of life."

The walls in Seigel's office are adorned with certificates and diplomas, as well as thank you notes and testimonials from satisfied families.

SOME SAMPLES:

From Boston: "Thank you for exemplary care that exceeded the boundaries of your job description and went far beyond due to your concern and your wonderful inclination to treat every patient as if he or she were dear to you...like your parent...both of them were so lucky to have you. We, her family, were lucky, as well."

From New York: "My mother has been your client for several years now, and I think it appropriate as her son to tell you that your organization has done a uniformly fantastic job in managing her medical care. The physicians that you have chosen for her care are first rate and have excellent experience in elder care issues. Over the years, her personal RN Case Managers have been very competent, reliable, and extremely helpful."

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