

Financial Assistance Program Description & Case Examples

Description

The Financial Assistance Program provides individuals living with multiple sclerosis in Greater Illinois with basic items and services that may help increase their independence and functioning. The program also connects individuals with programs that can help them regain their financial stability, such as Illinois Cares Rx, Medicaid and Social Security Disability Insurance. Items and services provided include: durable medical equipment; medical transportation; incontinence supplies; cooling aides; home medications; vehicle modifications; scholarships to wellness classes; physical and occupational therapy evaluations; and one-time emergency rent and utilities assistance.

Process

After a client contacts the Greater Illinois Chapter office and has completed an application, each client works with the Financial Assistance Coordinator in order to determine eligibility, identify needs and investigate available resources. Next, the Financial Assistance Coordinator works to connect the client with the services or items for which they qualify.

Some clients are referred to the chapter's Service Navigator, who helps the clients access public benefits and emergency assistance, if needed. The type of assistance provided is tailored to the needs of each individual, due to the varying levels of disability that our clients experience. Some clients simply need help in identifying the public benefits for which they should apply, while others need the Service Navigator's assistance throughout the entire application process. We assist our clients in the best way possible for their particular needs.

Case Examples

Case 1

A client who has been diagnosed for more than ten years and requires 24/7 care contacted our National MS Society for assistance with the installation of a roll-in shower. She lives in a very rural part of Illinois, and it had been very difficult for her to find help for the construction. Without the special shower, the client's bathing process was very unsafe: her husband would hold up a lift while trying to assist her in bathing, falling several times in the process. To make matters worse, her husband, who has been her main caregiver, has now also been battling cancer, which has taken a large toll on his ability to care for her. Very concerned for his health, our client wished to be more independent. With the help of the Financial Assistance Program, National Stepping Stones and the client's local center for independent living, we were able to provide the client with a complete bathroom modification that allows her to bathe independently and safely.

Case 2

A long-term client of the National MS Society has recently become paraplegic. The man now remains in a hospital bed 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Our program was able to obtain a voice-activated remote control so that he is able to control his TV, phone, lights and fan without the help of his caregiver.