

(W01) LIVING WITH ADVANCED MS—CASE STUDIES FROM ONE VA

The Veterans Healthcare System is able to offer a variety of services and levels of support unique to health care in the United States. This includes durable medical equipment, home based healthcare, grants (in varying amounts) for home adaptations, adapted vehicles, transportation to appointments, homecare and nursing home care. We present the cases of two veterans with advanced multiple sclerosis, who illustrate comprehensive VA care for different levels of eligibility. One veteran lives at home on respiratory support, the other in a nursing home at VA expense. Furthermore, these cases reveal important lessons critical to advanced MS, including quality of life (who defines it, how to define it) and advanced illness planning (setting, end of life decision making). The stories of these two veterans illustrate amazing (and unexpected) resilience and adaptability in the face of advancing disability and serve as inspirations to clinicians and caregivers as well as to persons with MS.

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