

My mother is now in her late eighties and her health is failing. She lives in a senior apartment with services. When she first moved to her apartment she was completely independent, but as the years have gone by we have had to arrange to have services added to help her remain as independent as possible. Last year we found out that she was not taking her medications as prescribed. Not having the medications at the proper dosage caused her to become confused and to feeling faint and falling. The falls made her fearful of going outdoors for fear that she would fall again.

We met as a family and discussed with mom what would be the most beneficial for her. She does not want to go into a nursing home, but we need to make sure that she is safe. She agreed to have a nurse set up her pills each week in a daily reminder. This did not work very well because the nurse found that mom would put medications back into the pill bottles. She did not always get the right medications into the correct pill bottles, so the nurse would not dispense them because she would not be held liable for giving mom the wrong medications. The apartment building that mom is in does not have a central locked storage area for pill bottles, so they needed to remain in her apartment. My mother is very short. We asked the nurse if she could put the medications into the reminder box and then put the pill bottles into a high cabinet over the refrigerator that my mother cannot reach. She was agreeable to this plan. We also made arrangements for a home health aide to come in each morning and help mom get ready for the day. She helps mom get dressed if she needs the help and also makes mom a light breakfast and gives her the pills out of the container that is set up by the nurse.

These simple services have created a big difference in my mother. She is getting the medications in the proper dosages at the same time everyday. The result is that she has become stronger and her memory is improving. With the increased strength she is more confident in her walking and has not had as many falls. The services also give me peace of mind knowing that someone is checking on mom. It also helps to know that she is not switching pill bottles around and taking too much or not enough of her medications. We want her to remain as independent as possible for as long as possible. The services are helping her accomplish this.