

Testimonial - Stroke Victim

After a surgery, at the age of 62, my wife Diane had a massive stroke to the communication area of her brain. The neurologist at Mass. General Hospital initially felt that six out of seven areas that contributed to communication had been obliterated. He showed us on the computer screen, the large "dead" area in her brain. We were given a fairly dire prognosis given the extent of the stroke with some thought that she might be able to produce single words in a couple of years. Diane could only speak our dog Mimi's name. She was offered 2 sessions per week of speech therapy as an outpatient closer to Boston, which to us did not seem nearly enough. We began a search for a speech pathologist close to home and we chose Cathy based upon community referrals, her education, back ground including the clinical achievement award that she had received for her legislative efforts in New Hampshire.

Upon meeting her, we recognized her genuine commitment and willingness to advocate for Diane to the insurance company to receive the maximum number of speech therapy sessions that could be afforded her since she had really not received any acute care speech therapy as an inpatient. Despite having been seen by multiple doctors and speech therapists, it was Cathy who, during Diane's initial visit, recognized that Diane need training at the smallest sound level as well as in breath retraining. Cathy thought outside of the box and employed a multisensory phonology program in order to re - teach Diane the sounds of our language. She also used signed exact English to train Diane's comprehension of grammar and prepositions, words that Diane later one told us that she could not even hear.

From this beginning, Cathy brought Diane on a journey from single sounds to single syllable words to multiple syllable words, rebuilt her grammar and finally to the point where Diane could continue the journey outside of speech therapy in conversation with others. Cathy counseled both Diane and myself through the anxiety of our inability to communicate with each other. Within 6 months of intensive effort and homework, Diane went to Florida for the winter with functional expressive communication, surprising the neurologist who saw her one year later when she was able to participate fully in the consultation, ask questions and answer them.

We love Cathy and for good reason, beyond an excellent therapist, she is an advocate, a medical resource and a genuine friend. - **Terry and Diane Golden**