

9/2/20

To Whom This May Concern,

My name is Fred Deslauries and I want to talk to you about the matter of placing me in another facility. I am a patient at Zambarano Hospital which is part of Eleanor Slater Hospital. The reason I write to you is that I have been told that the hospital has no choice but to discharge a certain number of people and I am a candidate. I am perfectly happy where I am and would not want to go anywhere else. I have been here at Eleanor Slater Hospital for 16 years. I came from a nursing home because I could no longer take care of myself. I now drive around in a power wheelchair, which gets me everywhere. I use my chin and head to control it as I have no use of my limbs. I can only move my head. This chair was built to meet my needs so I can get out of bed. When I do, I can leave my unit, go outside and on scheduled days, go on trips. I also play poker and games with assistance, which I enjoy tremendously. I would not want to change any of this.

When I was in a nursing home, I was in bed every day, all day, not able to get around. I felt like I was trapped. When I came to Eleanor Slater, I found freedom. Not only can I travel around here, but also in the community, the hospital has also set up a system for me that changes my channels on the TV for when I am in bed and out of bed, using my mouth. I also have an emergency call light system using my head. None of this would be possible without the staff at this hospital. My diagnosis is MS and it has taken my voice. The staff here has a microphone system that I wear daily to enhance my voice to talk loud and clear. This has made a big difference. Now that I can also call for help if needed, I feel so much more secure. When I was in the nursing home, all I felt was alone and scared. I would never want to go back to that feeling.

Another matter that I would like to bring up is the different services they have here that I need such as Speech Therapy for my voice, Rehab for my muscles so they don't get stiff to keep me fitting in my chair. There is also Adaptive Equipment who fixes everything to keep me functional. Another thing is that since I have been here for 16 years, my doctor, nurses and CNAs have been with me from the start. With MS, you never know what will come with my medical condition. Every person knows me well, so they have the advantage of knowing when I am in need medically.

My family is glad that I am here because they have a lot of confidence about where I came from and where I am now going. They like Zambarano very much! I support this place in every way. I have been to the State House two or three times. Our former representatives would advocate for us and the hospital and hosted us on what was called "Zambarano Day." My fears are that the State is forgetting about people like me.

If I were to leave Eleanor Slater Hospital, my life would fall apart. All good things would unravel. So please take this into consideration. Those that may want me to leave here are taking my life into their hands. I am writing to ask that you do everything you can to keep me happy and healthy right where I am. I am only 63 years old and since I have been in a facility since age 47, I have the right to choose where I will live the best I can. I plead with you to please honor this wish. Thank you.

Letter Dictated by Fred Deslauries  
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