



## Family Reflections...

Our lives changed when my mother was suddenly hospitalized and subsequently entered a skilled nursing facility. Although I was able to make a few trips to try and help as best I could, I knew I could not quit my job and leave my family in Hawaii to help my parents in North Carolina.

Additionally, I did not know the local resources nor the maze of Medicare/Medicaid requirements, and soon realized that I was not going to be the best help for my parents as they struggled with this new phase in their lives. Our family needed a caring person who knew the local resources, understood the Medicare/Medicaid system, could advocate for my parents whenever they needed it, and was professional in presentation as well as qualifications. We found all these qualities in Laurie Ray of COPE Eldercare.

As a clinical psychologist, I greatly appreciate Laurie's ability to pull from her background in counseling, case management, and advocacy with seniors. She helped advocate for my mother when services at facilities were not up to par, and has provided professional counsel for both my parents in understanding events and choices that needed to be made. Laurie has also helped my dad in organizing and coping with the myriad of ensuing paperwork that has resulted from all the changes.

But what I have also come to appreciate is her advice and counsel in helping me with my own fears and anxieties, as I constantly struggle with the guilt of not being able to physically do more for my parents. Laurie has been wonderful in providing me and my family with updates through e-mails and phone calls. I feel blessed and thankful that she is now an important part of our lives, and relieved that my parents have a professional to turn to whenever questions arise.

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