

Cared-for person's right to make decisions related to care: Sabrina

Palo cares for his wife Sabina, who recently had a stroke. The stroke caused left-sided weakness to her arm, leg, as well as left-sided facial weakness, but she can walk with a frame and is getting stronger and more confident in her walking every day.

Sabina also has swallowing difficulties and has thickener in her drinks, and her food is cut up into small pieces to make it easier to swallow. Palo is incredibly supportive of Sabina and is at her side to help her adjust to being back home. Carers come to support her with personal care in the morning and evening.

Five days after being discharged from hospital, Sabina was hospitalized for three days after trying to drink a glass of water and choking. Palo is very cross with Sabina and tells her she is not to drink any fluids again without thickener because she will choke again and become ill. Sabina protests and said that she wants to continue to try and reduce the thickness because she does not like how the thickener feels. Palo tells her that he is going to monitor all her intake of food and drink so he can make sure this does not happen again. Sabina realizes that her husband is preventing her from doing what she wants to do, she is unable to go anywhere without her husband being around.

Palo meets with a carer support adviser, and he tells her about his caring role for his wife and how exhausted he is, and he cannot go out on his own, because he must check on Sabina and making sure she is ok. When asked why he does this, he explains about the choking incident that hospitalized Sabina, it scared him, and he does not want this to happen again. He has told his wife she cannot reduce her thickener and checks on her because he thinks she will do this again. The carers support adviser explains to Palo that this is not his choice to make, and that Sabina can decide what she would like to do because she has the capacity to make this decision. The carer support adviser suggested that when they see the speech and language therapist to discuss this issue and try and come to agreement, they are both happy with.

At the next appointment, Palo and Sabina discuss the concern Palo has about Sabina reducing the thickener in her drinks and they devised a plan they all agree on.