



Abilities in Motion

Helping individuals with disabilities live
independent, self-determined lives

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Abilities in Motion Finds Success with Nursing Home Transition

The latest numbers surrounding coronavirus deaths in Berks County are astounding—3 out of 4 deaths are residents of nursing homes. As the numbers climb higher each day, transitioning people out of nursing homes and into independent living situations will save vulnerable lives.

During this crisis, the Nursing Home Transition (NHT) program at Abilities in Motion is more crucial to quality of life for people with disabilities than ever. The fight against COVID-19 must include measures to safely transition people from the high-risk environment of the nursing home and into their own homes. Those without a recourse to safely exit the nursing home may become one of those staggering statistics surrounding COVID-19 related deaths of nursing home residents.

While Abilities in Motion's NHT program has experienced its own share of devastating losses, including some who were on the cusp of transitioning out of the nursing home, they are also celebrating significant successes. Since the onset of the COVID-19, an incredible seven people with disabilities have been transitioned out of long-term care facilities and into independent living situations with all the supports and services needed for them to live independent, self-determined lives. In 2019, AIM assisted with 304 nursing home transitions.

In addition to frontline efforts in NHT, Abilities in Motion continues its advocacy work on behalf of people with disabilities at all levels of government, especially as it relates to the COVID-19 crisis.

Executive Director Stephanie Quigley gave the following statement:

“Now more than ever, advocacy organizations like ours are vital in bringing awareness to the issues that face people with disabilities. This includes telling our consumers’ stories to our federally elected officials who have failed to recognize the impact that

COVID-19 has had on people with disabilities. From the disparate distribution and rationing of PPE, to the fear of not being treated promptly for COVID-19 due to having a disability, to the forgotten faces of those living in nursing facilities, people with disabilities are once again facing increased marginalization and discrimination simply because of disability.

It is ironic that in the year 2020 when America should be recognizing the 30th Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act, that it seems we as a nation have been rolled back 30 years to a time where there were no legal protections in place to provide basic civil rights to Americans who also happen to have disabilities.”

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Abilities in Motion is Berks County’s Center for Independent Living. We offer support services, education, and advocacy for over 3,700 individuals with disabilities in over 30 counties in the state. AIM’s purpose is reflected in the Rehabilitation Act, which states that “disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to live independently, enjoy self-determination, make choices, contribute to society, pursue meaningful careers, and enjoy full inclusion and integration in the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of American society.”