

COMPASSION

Caregiver Initiative ●

When Jovy Michael's mom Cora was no longer able to care for herself, Jovy didn't hesitate for a second to become her primary caregiver. The fact that her mom had diabetes, Parkinson's disease, dementia and a recent hip replacement didn't faze Jovy, a Certified Nurse Assistant. "She's my mom, I would do anything for her. She had a hard life and if I can make it a bit better, that's what I will do," shared Jovy.

With the blessing of her family, Jovy quit her full-time job to care for her mom. The role soon became a 24-hour per day commitment and Jovy began to experience the exhaustion, sadness and frustration that many of the county's unpaid caregivers experience. "I knew I needed help, but I didn't know where to go to get it," lamented Jovy. An unexpected hospitalization for Cora placed them on the path to receiving the support they so desperately needed through the Family Caregiver Support Program, a Caregiver Initiative Pilot Program at Dignity Health's St. John's Regional Medical Center.

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When Cora was hospitalized, she was connected to Mayra Lopez, the Caregiver Navigator at St. John's Regional Medical Center. Mayra listened to Jovy's needs and connected her to additional supportive programs that included services from a nurse and a social worker who assisted her in obtaining key supplies—most notably a hospital bed. More importantly, Jovy received the support she needed in understanding what her mom was experiencing, how it would progress and how she could best care for herself through the process.

For Mayra, the caregiver navigator role has been deeply satisfying. She works closely with the caregiver for a period of three months via phone check-ins or Zoom calls. "I believe the program makes a HUGE difference. I am always so pleased when I see that people are using the services out there and I am grateful that hospital leadership is so supportive as well," said Mayra.

Two years into the pilot program, the data on the program's impact is already compelling and all the organizations involved are hoping the program will be extended. "This program is helping patients and caregivers experience a better quality of life and, perhaps more importantly, it is keeping people healthier and at home, where they would rather be," concluded Mayra.





185

Out of the three hospitals and healthcare system, more than 185 people have been served across the two Dignity Health locations in Ventura County.

\$627,440

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