



Bob

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From a Nursing Home to My Own Home

Bob spent a year and a half in a nursing home as a result of a traumatic brain injury acquired from a bike accident. Before his accident, Bob was a high school English teacher and an avid bike rider, averaging nearly forty miles a day. His brain injury affected his memory, balance and his ability to read. In addition, he had other physical and neurological problems that affected his ability to carry out every day tasks.

"I felt ready to leave the nursing home long before I did. It was helpful for a few months while I was recovering physically, but then I would rather have gone home and continued my therapy in my community. The nursing home was good for rehab, but not for living in. It wasn't a home. I was angry that I had to be there. If I was still in the nursing home, my life would be horrible. I would be totally forgotten by everyone. It would be a terrible way to live my life, always controlled by other people, always being told what to do and when to do it. It would have killed me, it was like a prison."

New York State's Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Waiver program has helped Bob reestablish an independent life in the community. Thanks to the TBI waiver housing subsidy, Bob is able to maintain his own apartment and has a network of community supports. Getting a person back into the community saves New York State at least \$19,000 per year.* Bob credits the progress he is making in his recovery to living independently:

"In the four years I have been living in my own apartment, I have learned new things and remembered how to do things I used to do before my accident. My memory is slowly getting better. I started out with a home attendant four hours a day. Now I no longer need this service. I learned how to live on my own again by trying things out and practicing how to do them right.

"I go to a support group at CIDNY and the support from other people with brain injuries is really helpful. I never could have made this much progress if I was still living in the nursing home. Now I have choices about everything in my life. I live how I want to live and do what I want to do."

* The New York State Traumatic Brain Injury Medicaid Waiver saves \$1,624 per person per month as compared to the cost of skilled nursing facility placement. Center for Disability Rights, 2003.