

Livingwellaz

HEALTHCARE NEWS YOU CAN USE FOR YOUR WHOLE FAMILY

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Enhancing the healthcare experience

Patient advocates provide assistance, information and even friendship

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RN Patient Advocates
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"We all need to work as a team, and the patient should be the center of the team."

Jackie Shore, RN OCN,
nurse advocate,
RN Patient Advocates of Arizona

'Sometimes you need someone there for you'

Jackie Shore could have used someone like herself a few years ago.

The registered nurse, who now works as a self-employed independent patient advocate, found herself in the middle of a medical situation that didn't go exactly as she'd hoped. Everything turned out all right, but it became clear to her how important it is for patients — including those who may or may not be admitted to a hospital or other healthcare facility — to have someone in their corner advocating on their behalf.

"Sometimes, you need someone there for you," said Shore, who usually charges an hourly fee, but also offers flat fees or package-style rates depending upon each client's needs and circumstances. "What I'm supposed to be is a fly on the wall."

Shore and her company, RN Patient Advocates of Arizona, are not affiliated with any physician or hospital, but she will accompany clients to doctor's appointments and take detailed notes for patients while in the exam room. One client, for example, has difficulty hearing and uses Shore's notes to make sure she understands everything her doctor has said.

Another of Shore's clients was given a cancer diagnosis and called her to discuss the treatment options she faced. Another client, an out-of-state resident, phoned Shore when he felt his mother was being inappropriately discharged from a local hospital.

Her main goal is to make sure her clients are getting the best care possible and aren't feeling rushed, stressed or overwhelmed as they make healthcare decisions. She establishes a health history of each client by making a medical timeline and then talks with each one about what they want to achieve with her assistance.

Shore said she tries to empower her clients, working with them to develop questions they can ask of their doctor on their own. She thinks doctors appreciate her approach, which she says ends up with patients needing less of their follow-up time.

"We all need to work as a team," she said, "and the patient should be the center of the team."

Help for Your Health Issues:

National Library of Medicine: www.nlm.nih.gov
Life Extension Foundation: www.lef.org
www.mercola.com
www.blaylockreport.com
www.westonaprice.org
www.marksdailyapple.com

Medication-specific Websites

www.drugs.com
www.rxlist.com

Genetic/Family Health Portrait

My Family Health Portrait: familyhistory.hhs.gov
Genetic testing and ancestry: www.23andme.com/
Genetic genie <http://geneticgenie.org/>
(Interprets the results)

Life Care Papers

Five Wishes- www.agingwithdignity.org/
Arizona Life Care Planning Papers
www.azag.gov/seniors/life-care-planning

Books

"The Disease Delusion" by Jeffrey Blum, PhD