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Attention:
CEO Dan Rohrbach
1450 Eastside Road
Platteville, Wisconsin 53818

April 1, 2020

Dear CEO Dan Rohrbach and Southwest Health Board of Directors,

My heart is overflowing with respect and gratitude to Southwest Health as I reflect back on my recent experience with your facility.

My mother, Maxine Skjeggstad, was admitted to Southwest Health on March 16, 2020 as we all watched the CO-VID19 virus become part of our everyday conversation. My sister and brother had been visiting her at Park Place Memory Care and all of us realized her life was fading. I had visited her February 15 weekend, but living in Plymouth, WI, my three hour drive was much more infrequent and Mom and I relied on phone conversations. We also took afternoon drives when I visited, reminiscing as we toured the countryside and talked of all those fun years in her lifetime. It was a time when she could just marvel at beauty and recall distant facts that astounded me!

As she remained at Southwest her condition was still concerning and yet all of us knew visits were not recommended in the welfare of all. As we began to fear that she might not ever leave the hospital, we received a phone number to call so that we could speak to her. We did put that to use, realizing each short call might be the last.

I explained to one of the staff, Joe, as he answered the phone on Saturday that this was heartbreaking for me being such a distance from my mother, and not being able to be right by her, physically having that comfort of holding her hand. Joe told me the hospital had just set up a video app called Zoom two days ago and asked if I wanted to try it. Strangely, I had just installed it days before to attend a virtual board meeting in my community. YES!!! So I had a short 40 minute chance to talk to Mother. She understood I was there...noted the camera and my face but had little strength to talk. It felt great to just be "physically" near by. Joe suggested that I call again early tomorrow as he would be there by 5:30AM. GOD BLESS JOE!!

I did call around 8AM Sunday morning and had another visit with Mom via our new access. As I talked with Joe afterwards, he asked if any other family members would like to join and have a video meeting very soon. I contacted my four children, they downloaded the app on their devices and we were ready to go in one hour! We

gathered to talk to their grandmother and just share their love and memories of growing up and her visits.

As that time ended, I thanked Joe so much. This was so important to me and was just healing my heart as I saw Mother slip away, totally away from all her family's physical touch. He told me that this video contact actually seemed to be calming her and that as a staff he and Emily would be happy to keep reconnecting us all day as each session expired. It worked beautifully! So we set it up again, allowing me to be in full view of Mother and vice versa. I could contact the office desk if any little detail seemed to be amiss to my eyes that bothered Mother. They came immediately! Otherwise, each time her eyes opened slightly, I would say soft words to settle her. She would breathe and return to peace all day long. I kept my eyes on that screen from 11AM until 9PM....it never needed to reboot. For some strange reason, it sensed this was an unusual need for the capabilities it had to offer. Mother was calmed time after time...my chronology of her life and fun memories, the people who had passed on before her, the people here that meant so much to her.... I was able to pray over her just as she and her sister had done with their father. I finally thanked her and told her that I loved her so much....that I would see her again soon and closed the computer. I again thanked Emily and Ann for their caring and allowing me this time with Mother. Technology really worked a peaceful magic!

We received a call at 5:30AM Monday, March 30. Mother had passed away in peace of natural causes.

The tears still flow here, as they do for all of her family, but as the long distance daughter, I will always smile and tell the story of the love that was displayed for me, a perfect stranger, and my family.

Compliments to your caregivers, Joe, Emily and Ann, and to your hospital for what they do so well!!!

The quality of care and compassion I experienced exceeded my expectations and are a testament to what your organization provides for Platteville and the surrounding communities.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

Sincerely, Donna Henry Counselman