



The Guided Living Team

meet owner

PATRICK FLAHERTY

OF GUIDED LIVING AND OUR SELECTMAN!

sponsor spotlight

An entrepreneurial spirit combined with innate compassion led Patrick Flaherty to start Guided Living Senior Home Care, a trusted senior home-care agency based in Plymouth since 2014.

Patrick had a healthy career in software and hardware product development when, through a personal experience, he saw how the existing model of in-home care for elders was flawed. Noticing how most private agencies were not setup to meet the standards that families expected, Patrick says, that's when it hit him. He researched and discovered that the rules around private homecare services are fairly loose, especially in Massachusetts. Private homecare agencies in Massachusetts have no statewide oversight whatsoever and no requirements for hiring practices or standards of care. This spurred Patrick to build Guided Living Senior Home Care, a homecare agency offering a higher quality of care, from the ground up. He says two main differentiators of Guided Living that improve quality of care include a team of Registered Nurses overseeing all clients and requiring all caregiver staff to be experienced, certified and fully vetted before entering any elder's home.

The type of services Guided Living provides include assistance with bathing, dressing, meal preparation,

continence care, specialize dementia care and all the in-between tasks that allow a senior to remain at home. The amount of care can be a few hours per week up to 24/7 round-the-clock care. "Our clients have complex and ever-changing care needs, having a team of registered nurses that manage all client care has prevented countless adverse events." Patrick said, "When you have an experienced and qualified caregiver staff, combined with licensed nurses managing care plans, the small changes in a client's condition that have significant medical consequences get reported up the line right away."



their nursing team. Patrick says, "This immediate feedback on what is happening in the home allows action to be taken before there is an unfortunate event like a fall or medication error. Traditionally, home care agencies have used handwritten notes in a notebook, checked every week or so by office staff, which is just not responsive enough for the highest quality of care."

The Guided Living team of certified homecare professionals is an exclusive group. Patrick says, "We actually only hire about one in 25 applicants. All staff go through every imaginable background

Patrick's agency has employed technology where all client care is monitored around the clock by the nursing team. If there are any reported changes of condition or issues, caregivers report through a mobile app that is monitored by



Patrick & Lindsey

check including a drug screen, employment reference check, written exam, Office of Inspector General review, CORI check, and federal warrants and arrests check." There is one requirement, however, that will not show up on any background check which Patrick says is intangible, "When we are hiring, that final question we always ask is, would we be comfortable with this person caring for our own family. If there is even the slightest hesitation, that person is not offered the position." Getting to know their select staff beyond their resumes fosters trust in Guided Living when assigning consistent caregivers: a more introverted client may appreciate a quieter caregiver while someone more outgoing may prefer someone engaging and able to hold conversation for hours. Sensitive to each elder's needs, Patrick's staff knows every situation is different and how important it is to match a consistent caregiver for each client.

The team at Guided Living understands the fear and hesitation that accompanies asking for their type of services. Patrick says that elders struggling may have anxiety or fear that if any help is accepted, it may mean that they will no longer be able to stay in their home. Patrick says, "Receiving that first little bit of help, even one shift per week where we can break the ice and show how helpful it will be, enables them to stay in the home they love for much longer."

Still, according to Patrick, families and seniors who call their agency are pointed in the direction of other community resources that may be more appropriate to fill the client's current need. "If a family member is concerned and looking for a way to have their loved one checked on once per day, meals on wheels through the Center for Active Living is a great resource." Patrick continues, "We are familiar with just about every agency and community resource from the South Shore, through Plymouth and Cape Cod and many times making that connection is exactly what the person needed."

Originally from New Hampshire, Patrick moved to Plymouth seven years ago after visiting with his parents, Maureen and Frank, who settled into Pinehills 15 years ago. He says he is lucky to be so close to family and grateful for their "unending encouragement" as he followed his passion, passing on a stable corporate career, to venture into business for himself. Patrick also met his wife, Lindsey, in Plymouth and they were married last year. "Lindsey has been beyond supportive and understanding of the demands of running a small business which can be tough on a relationship," Patrick says, "She has been a rock through it all and her advice and feedback has made Guided Living a better company." Patrick and Lindsey currently live near downtown Plymouth with their dog Sanka and bunny Yul Bunner.

Having previously lived on the South Shore and San Diego, Patrick says, "Plymouth was the first place I lived where that sense of community finally clicked." He goes on to say, "I realized that it is up to each individual, in their own way, to foster that sense of community, it doesn't just happen on its own. I joined the Plymouth Rotary Club, became an ambassador for the Chamber of Commerce, became a board member of the Plymouth non-profit senior service group, PNG, and met many people who are wonderful examples to follow and incredibly generous of their time." Patrick was also recently elected to the Plymouth Select Board. Through his latest role with the Town of Plymouth, Patrick strives to connect with residents one-on-one to hear their concerns and ideas. He says, "Being a voice and resource for people, especially those who are the most vulnerable, is a great feeling."

That same sense of community carries through to how he runs Guided Living. Patrick says, "We're not a franchise or a nationwide chain. We're a local company and from top to bottom our staff is based right here in the Plymouth area." Operating 365 days a year, if a call comes in at midnight on New Year's Eve, there's a compassionate and kind person from his local team there to answer and listen.

"We are all local people. We see clients, families and staff at the supermarket and around town. Upholding our good reputation means everything to the entire team."

To learn more about Guided Living's services, visit www.GuidedLivingCare.com or call their office line 24 hours a day at (508) 927-1213. Guided Living's office is headquartered in Plymouth with a satellite office in Falmouth.