Monadnock Community Hospital, Peterborough, NH

Larry's Story

Larry Paro was born at Monadnock Community Hospital more than 50 years ago. Since then, his life has taken him on many paths. He's been a construction worker, motorcycle racer, lobsterman, downhill skier, and antiques dealer. He even worked at trapping animals for the state of New Hampshire.

But all that physical activity took a toll on Larry's body.

"I basically destroyed my back and knees," he says. "All those years of work, work, work – just pushing myself to keep earning a living. And then I had a lot of injuries from the racing and skiing. I trashed my elbow, tore my rotator cuff and bicep muscle, ruined my back and knees ... It all added up. In the end, I was living in pain 24 hours a day."

Despite his pain, Larry continued to work on his construction projects. But as hard as he worked, he couldn't seem to keep pace with the rising cost of his health insurance premiums. Even with a steep deductible of $4,000, his premiums were averaging $1,000 a month – and going up.

"I felt like a hamster in a wheel," he says. "The more I worked, the more pain I had, and the higher the premiums went, until I couldn't work through the pain anymore. I couldn't even move. There was nothing left."

Larry's independent spirit suffered when he had to stop working. "I felt like a loser," he said. "I've never taken any handouts from anybody. That's not who I am."

When Larry came to Monadnock Orthopedics at Monadnock Community Hospital, he had no idea how he would pay for the care he so desperately needed. And that's when he learned about the MCH Financial Grant program, and about the state of New Hampshire's Health Access program. Through these programs, all of Larry's medical bills have been paid. He's had critical surgery and pain treatments that have allowed him to function again.

"It's incredible," says Larry. "I am so grateful to the hospital for what they've done for me. It's been a humbling experience for me to accept help, but God bless the people who make this possible. It gives you faith in humanity to see programs like this in our community."

Larry doesn't have much, but when a fundraising letter from Monadnock Community Hospital arrived in his mailbox, he reached for his checkbook.

"I'll give them anything I can," he vows. "Without this hospital, I don't think I'd even be here today. Making a donation is my way of paying forward all they've done for me."