



**Michael Bartlett, Port Dover
Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant**

Category: Partner in Care

Submitted by Care Coordinator Meera Dave from our Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant geography. You may recall Meera's name from one of our earlier stories. Thank you Meera, for taking the time to recognize more than one deserving caregiver.

The unconditional love between Diane and Michael is clear to anyone who meets them. The couple were married in 2012 and shortly after, Diane suffered an acquired brain injury that resulted in catastrophic brain damage and substantial decline in cognitive and physical abilities. It took Diane two years of intense rehabilitation before she was able to be discharged home from the hospital.

Over this journey that has included several medical setbacks, Michael has showed his unwavering support to his wife. He instinctively knows when to push Diane to keep going with her exercises and daily tasks and when to step in and help her. His ability to predict her needs and provide care that promotes her physical and emotional well-being is nothing short of incredible. He is always positive and upbeat, encouraging Diane and supporting her to muster the stamina to keep going every day.

Michael's exceptional dedication and caregiving skills as well as efforts to empower Diane have resulted in her ever-improving quality of life.

In reaching out to Michael, he shared a little more about his experience:



“Only a few survive a “catastrophic” burst of a brain aneurysm, but following years in hospital and rehab facilities, Diane was able to come home. While hospital administrators were strongly suggesting that I arrange for a nursing home for Diane, I knew that her being home was the best choice. With the Family Managed Care Program, I was able to find caring professionals who genuinely enjoy coming to work with Diane.

Despite being told that Diane’s prospects are very limited, thanks to the very high quality care she receives, those prospects continue to grow brighter. Michael said, “Whenever someone suggests that I’m doing something ‘Above and Beyond,’ I am reluctant to agree. I’m doing what, in my mind, must be done – and having a strong and positive support system helps immensely.”

Meera, their care coordinator shared that: **“It is hard not to get emotional when thinking about their story. You can just see the love between Michael and Diane and visits with them nourish your soul. We should all be so lucky to find a partner and caregiver like Mike.”**