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Brevard

Importance of Staying Connected

The topic of this article describes something that happens too often in the life of average senior Americans when our care system breaks down (though we seldom hear about it). Sadly, the following case did happen and underscores the importance of our new program, Staying Connected.

A man was in an assisted living facility receiving daily physical therapy but making no progress. The doctor transferred him to hospice care. At some point a bandage was placed on the man's toe. Four days passed without anyone looking at the bandaged area. When the bandage was finally removed, the man's toe was black and gangrenous. His leg had to be amputated midway between the ankle and knee, and several days later he passed away.

There are many questions to answer. What did the hospice team really do to care for the man? Why didn't they check the bandage earlier? A healthy person went from well care in assisted living, to needing more care, to hospice, to death from a treatable condition. During this process the man's daughter was also involved in his care, but to no avail.

Now consider if a Staying Connected volunteer with a medical background had been in regular contact with the daughter. He or she might have noticed something wasn't quite right about the

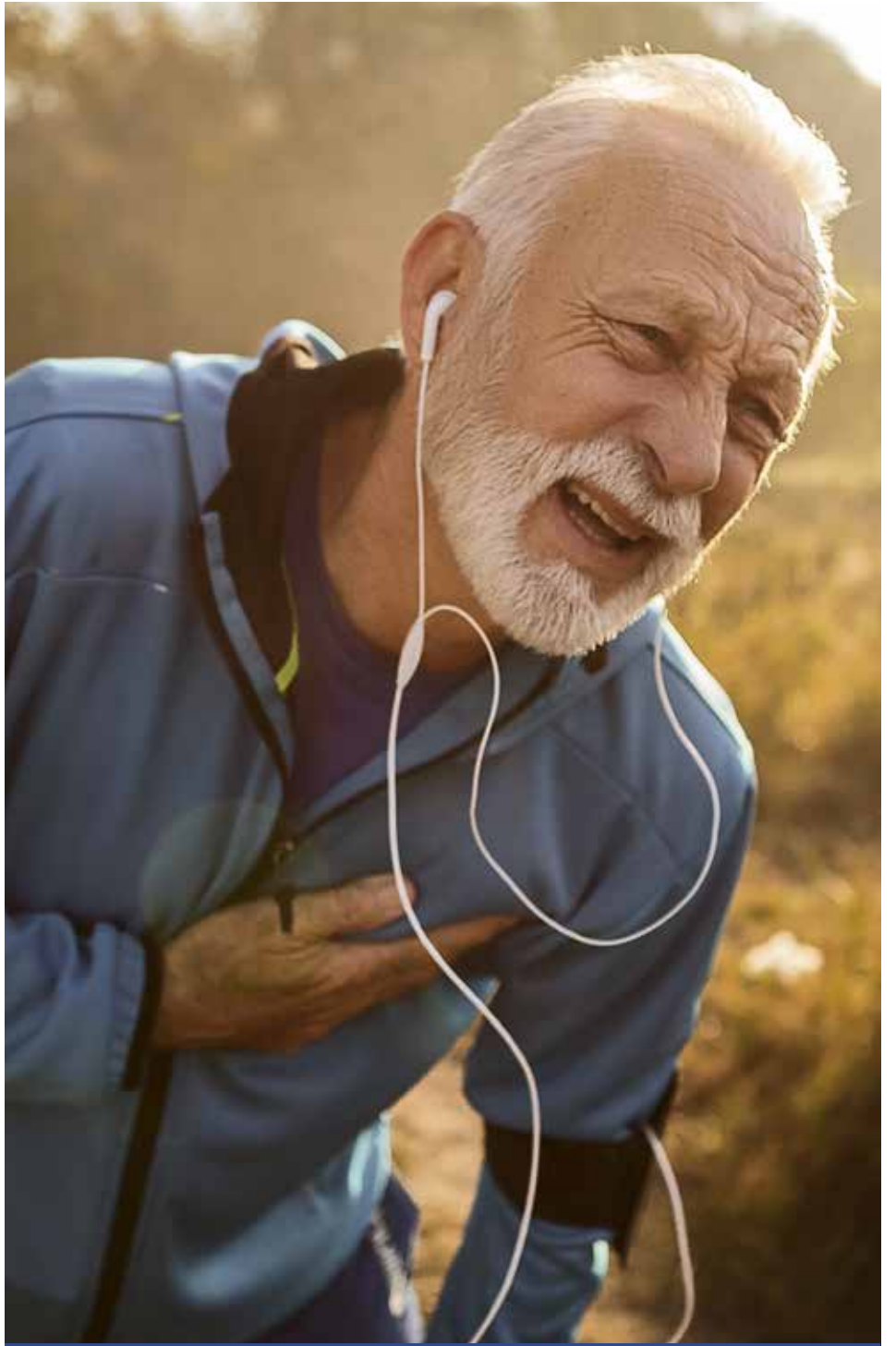
care process in the course of their conversations. This could have prompted the daughter to ask questions sooner. We will never know, but one thing is certain—we do need people in our lives.

Having a person to talk to is what Staying Connected is all about. Many seniors are alone, having outlived their families. They need a person who will listen and help them get answers to their questions. Today's automated phone programs simply cannot take the place of actual two-way conversation. At Helping Seniors, we want to connect seniors with someone who will be a friendly and reassuring presence.

If you want to be a volunteer caller, or enroll in the program to receive calls, contact Kim, our Information Specialist, at 321-473-7770 or at kimbernard@helpingseniorsofbrevard.org. I, or one of our Board members, will be following up to make sure you are happy with the caller you received. We recognize that seniors are a vulnerable section of our society and will do our best to ensure you are safe and satisfied with the program.

The Staying Connected program has started, now help us make it grow.

Contact Helping Seniors at 321-473-7770, at www.HelpingSeniorsofBrevard.org, or at P.O. Box 372936, Satellite Beach, FL 32937.



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