

Hello Kansas Legislators,

My name is Darlene Singhurst. I am a longtime resident of Neodesha, Kansas. I am 76 years old and receive in home services under the HCBS Medicaid Frail Elderly waiver. I receive 30 hours of service per week due to multiple disabling medical conditions of diabetes, congestive heart failure, arthritis and joint degeneration in my knees which I am not a good candidate for replacement surgery so I must rely on a walker for mobility. My direct support worker does house cleaning, laundry, grocery shopping, and transports me for medical appointments. I have been a widow for several years and am guardian, conservator, and Social Security payee for my 25-year-old grandson, Terrance Wylie, who has an intellectual developmental disability and has lived with me for the last nine years. Terrance is not capable of performing any type of competitive employment.

The household income requires that I pay \$250.00 client obligation each month to receive my HCBS in-home services. I worked hard for many years as a cook in various local restaurants and cafes, not expecting that I would be widowed and given the responsibility and expense of caring for my disabled grandson. Also in 2007, my home was in a flood when I lost everything. With the help of FEMA I was able to purchase a used mobile home, which I am proud to say I have paid off. However, utility bills are high and groceries are expensive. Paying my client obligation is something I always do. I was raised to believe one always pays their bills first and does the best they can with what is left over. If I did not have to pay a monthly client obligation, it would help me to buy healthier food and pay my bills as I have struggled some months with the utility bills being so high. I would greatly appreciate any help you can give me and others in my situation. Thank you very much for your time!

Darlene Singhurst

Neodesha, KS

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Written with assistance from Ed Viers, SKIL Resource Center

Mrs. Singhurst is a proud lady from the "Old School" and sacrifices much of her time and limited resources for others. The \$250 client obligation she unfailingly pays may not seem like much to many, but that amount could make a big difference for her and Terrance, especially considering Mrs. Singhurst's dietary restrictions due to her diabetes. As stated above, Mrs. Singhurst has experienced many difficult hardships in recent years. If the protected income level can be raised to eliminate her client obligation, it would certainly improve her quality of life and bring it closer to the level she deserves. Your full consideration of her circumstances, and those of many like her, will be greatly appreciated as you look into and hopefully take action necessary to eliminate their HCBS client obligations. Thank you!

Ed Viers, Independent Living Coordinator

SKIL Resource Center