

0211 SNAPSHOT: AMY CASAVINA HALL

211 helps CT residents find housing, secure child care, explore programs that can assist them with heating bills and gather the information and resources that empower them to strengthen their families and communities. But 211 also saves lives.



One winter night, a few months into a consulting position with United Way of Connecticut, Amy Casavina Hall learned this firsthand.

Amy's aunt had begun acting strangely. "It came out of nowhere," Amy explains. "She had succeeded in beating several dangerous diseases and was in the recovery stages with the cancer... And then, out of the blue, she started having behaviors we couldn't explain or understand."

First, she didn't recognize her home, and then her husband. "As a family member, it seemed like a sudden slide into dementia, which was scary but seemed like a reasonable part of aging." But her aunt's health worsened quickly, and it wasn't clear how to understand her symptoms. "It was hard to tell, as a loved one, not a medical professional, the difference between having a lesser appetite and not eating. What was confusion versus delusions?"

The situation became critical when a doctor ruled out dementia and said her symptoms could be something life-threatening, but her aunt refused treatment. Amy's cousin rushed home to help her parents, but the hospital said they couldn't treat her aunt without her aunt's permission. "My family was stuck and scared. We were told her life might be in danger, but we couldn't get her into treatment. My aunt was terrified by her delusions – perceiving her loved ones as a threat and not eating or drinking. It was a dark moment when the local hospital and emergency responders said there was nothing they could do without my aunt's consent."

Because United Way of Connecticut is home to 211, Amy was familiar with the program and its services. *Could she call on behalf of someone else?* she wondered.

"The whole family was terrified," Amy recalls. When she dialed 2-1-1, the 211 Crisis Specialist who took the call "was incredible. What a soothing, calm presence. She instantly understood the situation and put everything in motion."

The Specialist deployed the state's Adult Mobile Crisis unit, and an ambulance arrived at her aunt's house. When the EMT on duty refused to take her aunt, the clinician on the scene communicated with the 211 Crisis Specialist, digging deeper, asking the family questions that revealed that Amy's aunt was suffering from an unexplained psychosis – and she was immediately admitted to a facility.

211 had saved her life.

Once Amy's aunt was hospitalized, physicians could finally treat her immediate health problems and puzzle out what was wrong. Her road to recovery hasn't been easy, but she is safe, she is alive and she is on the path to wellness.

**The number of CT residents needing help continues to rise,
but 211 is there to answer the call 24/7/365.**

Thank you for supporting stronger investment in 211!