Day 108 - Another ER Visit & Florida Healthcare Changes

May 9, 2014 By Joseph Burke

Back on April 21st, I made an initial visit to the ER with chronic sinusitis (sinus infection.) At the time I was written a script for a 5 day Azithromycin regimen and was expected to make a full recovery. Two days later, I was back in the ER again over a case of conjunctivitis (irritation of the eyes) which was directly related to my sinus issues. On May 6th, at roughly 3AM in the morning, yet again I had to made another trip back to the ER for swollen glands in my neck. The pain had become so intolerable that I couldn't swallow food or even drink. My mouth was pooling with saliva as it hurt so bad to swallow from the swelling of my throat. I was seen yet again, and was told by the doctor there that the Azithromycin may not have been a long enough treatment regimen for 5 days, that I need a more powerful 10 day Amoxicillin 875mg tablets bi-daily. It's been a crazy month, that's for sure, and knock on wood, the swelling is gone, the medications are working and I'm feeling a lot better. Perhaps this sickness has grounded me from doing other things I normally would have, but I find it a blessing in midst of any suffering. Why? It humbles us, makes us seek patience, humility and compassion. In those moments in the ER, all I wanted was relief, to eat, sleep and be back to normal, but I had to endure long awake nights, tossing and turning, light meals, headaches, swollen glands, infections, irritated eyes and a plethora of other randomness. But I'm doing fantastic!

Florida Initiates HMO Plans for Medicaid Recipients

The state of Florida effective May 1st, has officially done away with it's former programs to treat specialty diseases like Hemophilia, HIV and Hepatitis C and instituted new plans for patients with now with an HMO. I typically don't go into much detail about my healthcare coverage because those things are generally very private for me. But this time, I think it's worth being open about. I've been on the MediPass program since I've moved to Florida back in March 2009, and it's been good in some spots, but bad in others. Example: It doesn't cover dental cleanings, just emergency dental procedures. It did cover annual eye exams, but on the flip side, I could never choose which doctor I wanted to visit, it was always predetermined. If you click on the image to the right, you'll see The Florida Agency For Healthcare Admission or AHCA has issued a statement about the removal of MediPass statewide; "*Effective October 1, 2014, the MediPass program will sunset statewide.*" Now the upswing of this new wave of healthcare options is that now I can choose from over 20 other companies to manage my healthcare at no cost. I chose to go with Clear Health

Alliance CHA because their strong coverage on infectious disease and treatment seemed to outshine the other options. This new plan also offers me annual dental cleanings, eye exams and I was able to choose which doctor I wanted to be my Primary Care Physician or PCP. The only hiccup I've encountered in this new transition occurred this past week when attempting to order month 5 of my Sovaldi and Ribavirin liver therapy. My claim was rejected, and I was a little on edge for a couple days. Having only a 5 day supply on hand of Sovaldi+Ribavirin, and knowing I couldn't miss a single dose given the overall importance of this liver treatment, I was a little concerned about this new healthcare HMO, CHA non-MediPass ordeal. But, come to find out, all that CHA required was a pre-authorized form for the continuation of the treatment for my final two months. One quick fax, and month 5 was delivered safely in my hands yesterday morning. During this transition of healthcare coverage here in Florida, I'll be sure to blog about pros or cons about the new system. Time will tell, so we'll just have to wait and see how things go.

May is Hepatitis Awareness Month



The American Liver Foundation declares every May to be Hepatitis Awareness Month, and in honor of May 2014, I have created some awareness wrist bands that you can buy to show your support for Hemophilia, HIV and Hepatitis C. These bands are only $5 each, and showcase our web site address on one side, and my favorite Christian saying "Too Blessed 2 Be Stressed" on the other. As an added bonus, in the inside is engraved with "*Hemophilia, HIV & Hepc*," so you can show your support for friends and family. All proceeds from these bands will go to help fund cost of this web site, blog and the "***I Strive 2 Thrive***" campaign to raise awareness for Hemophilia, HIV and Hepatitis C. Get Yours Today! Visit http://www.istrive2thrive.com for more information.

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