

For Retired College Professor, MyConsult Service Makes the Grade

It's challenging when someone becomes chronically ill and places their spouse in the role of caretaker. But the situation becomes even more difficult when the caretaker becomes sick also. That's what happened with George and Sondra Launey, both 65.

Eight years ago, Sondra, developed a serious medical condition called progressive supranuclear palsy. In order to care for her, George Launey retired early from his position as an economics professor at Franklin College, where he had taught for 32 years. He had also served as a forensics economics consultant.

"I was Sondra's primary care giver, but I developed a heart condition," he says. "I'd be exercising and would suddenly get out of breath. Once I stopped exercising, it went away. But then last fall we bought a condo in Texas, and when I climbed the stairs to our third-floor unit, I became lightheaded and breathless. That's when I decided this was not normal."

Launey went to a cardiologist, who performed a coronary artery catheterization angioplasty that showed Launey's arteries were clear. The cardiologist then sent Launey to an electrocardiologist who conducted a number of tests before making a diagnosis of exercise-induced bradycardia, which is an abnormally slow heart beat. The physician recommended that the patient have a pacemaker implanted.

"My dad was a physician, and I learned early on that when you have something serious, you get a second opinion," says Launey. "I found out about Cleveland Clinic's MyConsult program and decided to give it a try. With MyConsult, you do everything online and upload all your records. It's relatively inexpensive and exactly what I needed."

MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion program is a sophisticated, Web-based extension of Cleveland Clinic's 80-plus-year role as one of America's most respected referral institutions. The secure, online service provides remote medical second opinions from Cleveland Clinic specialists for more than 1,000 life-threatening and life-altering diagnoses.

"Since I was scheduled to have the pacemaker implanted soon, we needed to get the second opinion quickly," says Launey. "The Cleveland Clinic came back with the report that very next week. It was a detailed, three-page report and very thorough. Basically, all the doctors recommended the same thing. So I went ahead and had the pacemaker inserted.

"All the treatment from all my doctors was first class," he adds. "My Cleveland Clinic doctor concurred with my physicians in Austin, Texas, and had kind words to say about my doctors down here, which pleased them very much. So everyone's happy with the Cleveland Clinic."

Now Launey is back to jogging on a treadmill for about 25 minutes at a time. "I feel fine now – except for some lower back pain, which is probably from picking up my wife who falls a lot, due to her illness" he says. "She's getting sicker now, but when I retired, we traveled a lot, and we were able to see most of the places we wanted to before she became too ill.

"Fortunately, I was never too ill to take care of her," he explains. "But there was a period of a couple months – between when I thought

I had a problem and when I was diagnosed – when I worried that I might have a blockage. It ends up that there was no plumbing problem, and it was a simple procedure to have the pacemaker put in place.

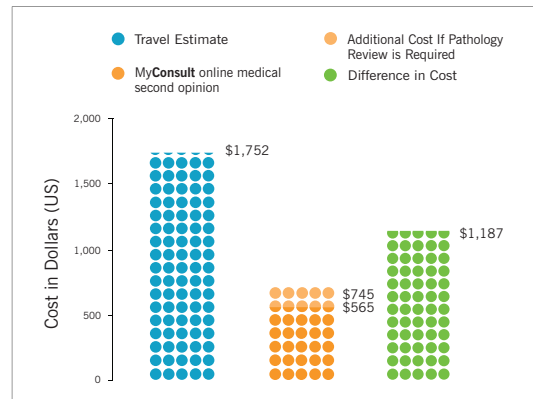
"I'm very happy that the Cleveland Clinic doctor agreed with what my doctors down here were telling me," Launey adds. "I'm one of his fans."

The following average cost statistics of traveling to the Cleveland Clinic from Austin, Texas is based on the demographic information of the previous MyConsult patient testimonial.

Austin, TX to Cleveland Clinic (approx. 1,378 mi., 21 hrs 4 min)
Average price for two people traveling to the Cleveland Clinic:

\$1,126.....	Roundtrip Flight for 4 days
\$426.....	Hotel Stay 4 day, 3 nights
\$200.....	Food/Drink 4 days
\$1,752.....	Total Trip Estimate
\$565.....	MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion
\$1,187.....	Difference in Cost

(Prices are based on an average stay in the City of Cleveland and may vary depending on time of year, length of stay, and advance booking of flight.) October, 2008, v1



Cost of a MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion vs. Cost of Travel

To learn more about Cleveland Clinic's MyConsult program, visit www.ClevelandClinic.org/myconsult. Registering is easy, and if you choose to seek an online medical second opinion through Cleveland Clinic, the entire process should take 30-45 minutes. You may also contact the MyConsult office at 216.444.3223 or 800.223.2273 ext 43223.