Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

When You Need Extra Support

Jamie S. - Washington, District of Columbia

That's Medicaid *shares stories of people covered by Medicaid at critical points in their lives, underscoring the importance of stable health insurance coverage in building a Culture of Health.*

Jamie's teenage daughter was born with a genetic syndrome that left her with multiple disabilities and complex medical needs the family's private insurance doesn't completely cover. Medicaid provides a backstop of specialized care to ensure she is able to live with her parents and siblings at their home in Washington, D.C.

Medicaid began supporting Jamie's daughter when she was four years-old under a waiver in the District of Columbia and many other states for disabled children. The program provides a needed medical bed and wheelchair so, as her mother says, she can "be part of the community" and a school environment.

"I feel like it changed our lives," Jamie says once her daughter was approved for the program. "Without it she would have to live in an institution or a hospital."

Now Jamie, her husband, and the rest of the family are working to find a plan for the future when her daughter will be a legal adult in several years. Because she is nonverbal and likely never able to work, she will be on Medicaid long into the future.

"It has really provided a peace of mind," Jamie says.