

## **Kaiser Permanente Denies Needed Surgery For 88 Year Old WWII Veteran**

*Kaiser Permanente denies needed surgery for healthy 88 year old WWII Vet –offers him only narcotics and suffering!*

May 13, 2010 (FPRC) -- Daniel Kovner (88) has been paying health insurance to Kaiser Permanente for 35 years and selflessly volunteered over 10,000 hours to Kaiser over 22 years. They have deserted him in his hour of need. Daniel is unusually healthy for his age except for a progressively worsening hip problem. This has led to a rapid decline in his ability to walk and has become a source of constant debilitating pain.

Daniel Kovner has visited different Kaiser departments at least 10 times for this problem over the last year. His son, who accompanied him to his last Kaiser Dr. appointment, reported that they were told there was a 50% chance he would die or become a burden to son if Kaiser performed surgery on his hip. The Doctor refused to do any surgery. Then Dr Mesna of Kaiser in Woodland Hills, Ca, looked at Daniel and said, "You are 88, take the pain pills and live with it—what do you expect at your age?"

The Kovner's did not accept this diagnosis and with some research, found world renowned orthopedic surgeon Dr. Brad Penenburg at Cedars Sinai in Beverly Hills. He has developed a less invasive hip surgery that causes almost no damage to the soft tissues which results in faster recovery and much less pain. Dr. Penenburg routinely performs this surgery on patients over 90 years old, and it is approved by Medicare. The Kovner's secured an appointment for Daniel with Dr. Penenburg and he confirmed Daniel was an excellent candidate for this procedure. The X-rays showed direct bone on bone in his right hip. Dr. Penenberg's prognosis for my Daniel's recovery was very encouraging.

Further research it was found out this surgery is performed all over the country and is rapidly replacing the traditional invasive hip replacement surgery Kaiser performs and the long difficult recovery periods that creates so much extra stress on the elderly.

Since this was a procedure that Kaiser did not do, Daniel attempted to obtain approval from Kaiser to allow Medicare to pay for this less invasive hip surgery. After many frustrating attempts to get answers, he finally received a letter denying his right to have the surgery. Please understand—Medicare would pay for this if only Kaiser would allow it. Kaiser controls his Medicare by a paper signed in December 2009. The reason Kaiser gave was that it was unnecessary surgery. Kaiser has many time consuming appeals processes and stall tactics, all the while my Daniel is in agony. He is not asking Kaiser to pay a penny of the surgery, Medicare pays 80%, and Daniel is willing to pay all the rest. Kaiser said NO!

To keep Mr Kovner' health from worsening, he is now scheduled for the surgery with Dr Penenberg at Cedars Sinai on May 25, 2010. He is taking what little savings he has and paying cash of around \$35,000 in order to restore his quality of life and dignity. Of course he is terrified about spending just about all he has left in savings but Kaiser is leaving him no choice.

Daniel Kovner is a WWII vet, was with Patton's army and was one the first soldiers who liberated the

Nazi concentration camp at Dockow, Germany. He spent his life raising his family and was a hair dresser for 45 years in Woodland Hills, Ca. His wife was Mary Ann Jackson, "Little Mary Ann of the Little Rascals" who passed away a few years ago. He has a vibrant personality, a great sense of humor and everyone loves to be around him. His mind is sharp and he would be great to interview. His goal is to restore his quality of life. Kaiser's goal seems to be to give him drugs and have him go away and die.

Daniel's health was great until the last few months when his hip began to give out. He is independent, still drives and takes care of himself until last month. He presently lives in Leisure Village in Camarillo, Ca. He loves his independence, asks nothing from anyone, lives within his means and has a small amount of savings that Kaiser will force him to wipe out.

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