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Faith, Family, Outstanding Care Team Sustain Dayton Man Through Near-Death Crises'

DAYTON -- Kidney failure, a blood infection and a failing artificial heart valve had Warren Kearney at the brink of death more than once during his 10-week hospital stay. But his supportive family and enduring faith pulled him through -- along with his dedicated care team at Grandview and Southview medical centers.

“Praise the Lord that my daughter picked the right hospital with the right people,” Kearney said. “If anyone had to go through this, I certainly recommend them to come here because they are the best in the country.”

He presented Nov. 1, 2010, at the Southview Emergency Department, feeling fatigued and generally awful. Within 24 hours, the 82-year-old had gone into ventricular tachycardia and had to be resuscitated. “If that had happened at home, I doubt he would have survived,” said Ingrid Brown, DO, who saw Kearney throughout his stay.

He was rushed into the catheterization lab for a procedure with cardiologist Thomas Ruff, DO. His rapid heart rate was addressed, but Dr. Ruff quickly determined that Kearney’s titanium valve was failing due to his bacterial blood infection. The valve would need to be replaced.

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Infectious Disease specialists Catherine Bacheller, MD, and Jack Bernstein, MD, saw Mr. Kearney extensively through most of his hospitalization, and Karl Borsody, MD, performed a 12-hour surgery to replace the failing valve with a pig valve.

Mr. Kearney went into kidney failure and was placed on short-term dialysis under the care of Nephrologist Barbara Doerr. Once he was well enough, Kearney was placed in the care of James Beegan, DO, and his supporting team of physical therapists.

“Most of his rehab stay he was very quiet and fatigued, and his daughter said he just wasn’t himself,” Dr. Brown said. “But we adjusted some of his medicine, and that was definitely a turning point. I walked up here (to the rehab unit) the next day and he was bowling on the Wii, laughing and feeling much better.”

“Our whole family is so happy and so grateful to Grandview for getting him better and allowing us to take him home,” said Lois Gwin, Mr. Kearney’s daughter. “In two and half months, we’ve gone through death I don’t know how many times, two surgeries, going through rehabilitation to relearn everything from eating to walking. They never once made 82 years old too old to live and to still do what God wants him to do here on earth – to bring people to the kingdom of heaven.”

Now that he no longer has a titanium valve and no longer needs to be on Coumadin, Warren was able to have his first taste of chocolate in 20 years. But that was not nearly as sweet as what awaited him on Jan. 13 ... the day he left Grandview.

“I am going to miss these people terribly because they have been so good to me,” Kearney said. “I really couldn’t ask for any better help. I am able to talk, eat better and move my hands and legs. I know it’s been a struggle, but boy with their help I sure made it. It’s going to be great to get home.”

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