

Hello, my name is Laura DuBrava, I live in Hamden.

My Mother has had dementia for 6 and a half years.

My oldest brother was named conservator soon after my mother was judged unable to take care of her own affairs.

In a "normal" family situation, no matter who is conservator, family would put aside any petty differences they had, to put the parent's needs first and to respect each other's needs to maintain a relationship with their parents. I believe the laws are set up now assuming this to always be the case.

Unfortunately that is not always or often what happens.

I have had to practically beg my brother to see my mother at times. He has put conditions on my visits such as limits on the amount of visits, and what I can do when I visit. If I have a problem with her care, he assumes it is something that is my fault, and cuts back my visitation. This is possible due to the vagueness of the conservator statutes. I have gone before the probate system countless times at great personal expense to just have access to my mom and to at least share in the decision making process concerning her estate and health care. Each time the probate judge seems unwilling to make a decision other than to carry on the status quo or to extend the process and charge me another \$150 to come back in a few weeks. After 10 or 15 times this gets old. I have asked him to rescues himself and asked the state attorney who over sees the probate judges to intercede. I have asked the GAL appointed by the state to help for the past four years; she seems to not care as this seems to be just a check for her. Any "extra" work that this would cause her is ignored. I have no recourse because I am not the conservator.

All attempt to rein in my brother's personal vendetta against me and my mother's relationship have failed. The best I can do is to hire an attorney to try to negotiate with him via his attorney. I pay my attorney out of pocket; he takes his fee's from her estate. At this point it has been three years since my brother has given an accounting of her finances to the probate court. He does not allow me to speak, email or contact him directly. All contact not via an attorney, is via my middle brother, needless to say this put a strain on my relationship with him.

It seems that no matter how bad the conservator's behavior is, short of neglecting her physical needs, the state backs him up. No one seems to care about a daughter's love for her mom and their need to continue what has always been a close relationship and the toll of this on both of them. If I notice that she has a UTI, I am causing trouble and being nosey, even if eventually she ends up in an ICU because of it. If I find pills on her floor, I am making it up and causing problems with the facility. If my mother falls, I am automatically assumed to be at fault and prevented from seeing my mother for weeks at a time. All this has often caused great personal emotional cost to me and my mom. I believe that emotional abuse of siblings and parents should result in a serious look at a change in conservatorship. Not every one can be a good conservator; I would have better luck if a stranger off the street was it for my mom. There need to be safeguards in place and an appeals process to make sure conservators, probate judges, and GAL's do what is in the best interest of the people they are sworn to serve and help, not the easiest, least amount of work.