

## Woman Tries To Prove She's Not Dead



TheOmahaChannel.com  
9:48 a.m. CST December 7, 2006

OMAHA, Neb. - The government maintains that an Omaha woman is dead, but Margaret Carol Morris said she's very much alive and fighting to prove it. Margaret Spring, Morris's daughter, said it started when she fired a hospice nurse for inadequate care. Hospice workers notified the government that they weren't caring for Morris.

The hospice director told KETV NewsWatch 7 that Medicare workers made a mistake by entering the code for dead instead of dismissed into a computer.

The mistake is costing Spring as she tries to keep up with her mother's medical bills while Medicare isn't paying. "A lot of stress. A lot of frustration, and I don't know where to go. I don't know what to do," Spring said. "I've cashed in \$3,000 worth of bonds. All of that hasn't gone toward the medicines but a good part of it has."

Spring said she's used her savings since June to pay for her 95-year-old mother's heart medicines because the insurance company won't.

"I called them up and they said she's dead," Spring said. "I get a letter from Social Security of condolence saying they were sorry for my mother's death."

Margaret called Social Security to say her mother wasn't dead.

"They said, 'You can get a doctor to verify she's alive,'" Spring said, and she followed that advice. "The patient is awake, alert and functioning well. She did not expire."<sup>1</sup>

She took letters from her mother's doctors to the Social Security building in Omaha.

"The lady there was very nice she said she understood the problem and she would take care of it," Spring said.

The manager of the Social Security office here in Omaha told KETV NewsWatch 7 that workers updated the information to show that Morris is alive. The information has been sent to Medicare Part D administrators, but it hasn't yet been updated.

Morris has congestive heart failure and takes about a dozen pills a day, she said.

The manager of the Omaha Social Security office said she would call the regional Medicare office immediately to change Morris's status from dead to alive.

"I want her back alive," Spring said, "I want her back on Part D for her medicines."

The local manager said she hopes to have Morris's problem fixed in two or three days.