**Case Study for Chapter 7: Health Care and Health Challenges**

Ken had never planned to live anywhere except his family home, where he raised his three children and enjoyed the great outdoors. Last month when he was hospitalized and subsequently discharged to a nursing home, Ken could only think about the current hunting season and the camaraderie he was missing from his fellow deer club members. Since becoming a widower, when his high school sweetheart and spouse Ruth died 10 years ago, Ken had put on too much weight and neglected regular doctor’s appointments. His two daughters, who reside in other states, contact him regularly by phone. Ken’s now retired only son lives nearby and works the family farm but he is out of touch concerning his dad’s health and health care needs. The shock of learning about his worsening diabetes and metastasized cancer is causing Ken and his family much emotional distress. Ken doesn’t understand the words all the physicians and nurses are using—palliative care, slow medicine, and advanced directives—and he can no longer bear weight, transfer independently, or take steps. It appears that Ken might be released to the home of his oldest daughter, a retired nurse, and hospice care will be put in place if he can show improvement in his activities with the physical therapists.

1) How might social workers communicate with Ken and his children, as future plans are considered?

2) What might be the thoughts and feelings that Ken is experiencing?

3) How might the geographic environment matter insofar as what housing, home health, and hospice resources are available to Ken and his family?

4) What struggles may be associated with Ken moving to another state? What challenges might his daughter face in caring for him?