

OAST & HOOK

Care Management

According to a national survey on healthcare and other elder care issues that appeared in the September 2000 edition of *Family Circle* magazine, more than 22.4 million households report caring for a family member over the age of 50. More than 36% of those caring for an elderly family member live more than 100 miles from that person, and fully a third have an elderly family member who is living alone. Further, according to MetLife, almost three-quarters of the caregivers report that their own health is adversely affected by their role.

Many baby-boomers are finding that their parents are increasingly in need of professional care, such as assistance with healthcare requirements and help with financial and legal matters. Well-intentioned members of families of those with these needs often try to provide the necessary level of care themselves, but they quickly realize that caregiving is time-consuming, expensive and best administered by qualified specialists.

Often, adult children are located far from their elderly parents and are unaware of the toll that illness and aging are taking until a crisis occurs. Dealing with the crisis and its aftermath can be emotionally wrenching, and has the potential to be repeated unless appropriate plans and services are put in place.

Equally troubling is the situation where elderly parents living alone and with diminished capacities, become the victims of scam artists and untrained and unlicensed "caregivers." Yet children are often at a loss as to how to assess their parents' capacities or how to develop a plan of care that will secure their parents' safety while dealing with their infirmities.

To support families in these situations, Oast & Hook developed an experienced care management team which consists of four Elder Law attorneys. The services this team offers are designed to provide a resource for information, care management, tax return preparation, bill paying, and implementation and monitoring of care.

In order to maximize the care management services and meet the varied needs of elderly loved ones, it is important to plan in a comprehensive manner. One should consider healthcare, financial and legal issues, as well as services that may be needed on a regular and ongoing basis. When the planning process is over and the actual caregiving starts, it is helpful for families to have a knowledgeable Elder Law firm that can assist the family frequently with legal, accounting, financial, health and social services. Working together with each client, Oast & Hook provides critical insight and directions within the context of an overall care management plan.

With one of the first care management programs in Hampton Roads, Oast & Hook is proud to provide its clients with the resources that will help them make the best caregiving plans for their loved ones.

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