

# Long-Term Care Planning and Alzheimer's

By: Doral Tuttle

One of the most common reasons that families need long-term care is when their loved one receives a diagnosis of Alzheimer's. Depending on the stage of the disease when it is diagnosed, the person could possibly remain in their home until family members or a home care-giver can no longer manage their loved one's care, or they may need to be immediately placed in a care facility.

Maintaining autonomy is important to the Alzheimer's patient and they may become argumentative as they struggle to understand what is happening and vacillate between normal behavior and cognitive challenges. At this time, the family, with the aid of an experienced elder law attorney needs to get the proper legal documents signed in order to protect the loved one's property and finances and then find a way to finance the care. Waiting for an Alzheimer's diagnosis is not necessary and estate planning documents, such as a power of attorney and living will can be executed at any time, even in healthy individuals.

Darol Tuttle, a Tacoma-based attorney specializing in elder care law believes it's never too soon to prepare for eventual long-term care needs, and he emphasizes that financing such care does not have to burden the individual or family member if planning starts early. With the increased incidence of Alzheimer's diagnoses each year, he sees many family members seeking immediate long-term care financing help, along with needing all the proper legal documents executed by an already cognitively impaired person. "Early planning care reduce a lot of the last minute stress," says Tuttle.

## Getting Legal Help

I offer free assessments to determine if you or a loved one is currently eligible for benefits that might help pay for long term care to include service or non-service connected benefits such as special monthly pension, aid and attendance, or homebound. This eligibility report will also alert you to the possibility of eligibility for Medicaid through the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) or COPES. To start, simply request that a Client Worksheet be sent to you. Call today at **253-272-1904** **begin\_of\_the\_skype\_highlighting** **253-272-1904** **end\_of\_the\_skype\_highlighting** or request by email at [info@daroltuttle.com](mailto:info@daroltuttle.com).