

Life Care Planning:  
Local Law Firm Taps into New Model of Care for Seniors in Brevard County

The Law Firm of William A. Johnson, P.A. has always considered itself to be on the leading edge when it comes to providing its predominately elderly clientele with the most accurate and up-to-date information and legal services available.

Practicing in the area of Elder Law, Johnson and his staff routinely help clients with issues pertaining to estate planning, incapacity planning, probate, guardianship, Medicaid planning, and long term care needs. It was in these last two areas that Johnson felt there was just something missing; something critical to the future care needs of elders as they face the many daunting situations associated with the aging process.

“For Medicaid clients in particular, my staff and I would meet with the loved one’s family for as long as it took to get them qualified (for Medicaid). Then we never knew how the person or the family got along afterwards” says Johnson. “In other cases, I would counsel family members and often make referrals to local geriatricians or geriatric case managers who would basically “take it from there.” I still felt there was more that could be done to ensure that seniors in our area were getting good care.” says Johnson.

For most families who have an aging loved one facing chronic illnesses and long term care needs, there are a myriad of issues to be dealt with including finding the appropriate residential setting for their loved one, finding and coordinating necessary medical care, and determining how to pay for the costs of current and continued care. Questions also come up about insurance, prescriptions, and government benefits. These situations can be quite overwhelming, leaving family members confused and frustrated.

As a result, Johnson did some research and found that, in other parts of the United States, there was a service being offered by elder law attorneys called Life Care Planning. This model is based on three basic principles: finding, obtaining, and paying for good care. Johnson says, “Instead of focusing our attention on one facet of the situation, we will combine our legal expertise with the medical knowledge and background of an elder care coordinator to come up with a plan that addresses the current legal, financial, and medical needs of the person for the rest of his or her life.”

In June, Johnson launched the Life Care Planning concept in Brevard County and believes that it can significantly impact the way long term care for our elderly citizens is coordinated. According to Johnson, “Our goal is to continuously provide family members with the knowledge to make informed decisions while their aging loved ones reap the benefits of good care.”

William A. Johnson, P.A. is located at 21 Suntree Place in Melbourne, with a satellite office located at One Senior Place in Viera. For more information on Life Care Planning, call (321) 253-1667.