It is important to decide how future health care, legal, and financial decisions will be made before things reach the crisis stage and the person with dementia can’t participate. These decisions should be recorded in legal documents for two reasons:

1. to make sure that a person’s wishes are honored
2. to make sure the family has enough information about those wishes in order to make life-and-death decisions

The ability to plan for future decisions depends on one’s ability to:

• understand the available choices and the results of those options
• make and communicate a choice
• express values and goals

Once these matters are understood, a range of legal documents can be drawn up to help ensure that the person’s wishes will be carried out.

There are many legal tools that can help you and the person in your care now and in the future. Financial and legal planning is necessary and should be started early. Planning for the future should include looking at income tax issues, protecting existing assets, saving for the future, and paying for care. Long-term planning will help you and the person with AD feel more secure, no matter what the future brings.

Source: The Comfort of Home for Alzheimer’s Disease
Financial and Legal Planning Tools

**Will**—a legal document that spells out how money and property is to be given out after death. If a person is disabled or does not have the physical or mental abilities to tend to his or her own affairs, other legal papers are needed.

**Living Trust**—a legal document that names someone (a trustee) to manage a person’s finances or assets. A trust includes advice on how to manage assets and when to distribute them (give them out). It can also protect assets from probate, which is a long legal process to make sure that the will is legal. Usually, the trust goes into effect if a person becomes unable to function well and is likely to make bad financial decisions.

**Power of Attorney**—a document that names someone to make decisions about money and property for a person who is unable to make those decisions. A person should have one power of attorney for financial management and a separate power of attorney for health care.

**Representative Payee**—someone named by the Social Security Administration to manage a person’s Social Security benefits when that person is unable to look after his or her own money and bill paying.

**Conservatorship**—a legal proceeding in which the court names an individual to handle another’s finances when that person becomes unable to do so.

Making a will, setting up a trust, providing income, and protecting assets may involve future decisions about giving to charity, insurance policies, annuities (yearly payments), and other instruments. This kind of planning is necessary and should not be put off. If the person in your care is in the early stage of AD, and still able to make plans for the future, it is a good idea to suggest he prepare a letter of instructions. The letter should list all property and debts, location of the original will and other important documents, and names and addresses of professional advisors. It should also include funeral wishes and special instructions for giving away personal property such as furniture and jewelry.

Health Care Decision Making and Alzheimer’s Disease

It is important to remember that in the early stage of Alzheimer’s disease, the person with dementia may still be physically strong and may also have serious memory problems, but it is likely that he can still make his preferences about treatment known. His choices should be followed whenever possible. Because of the progressive nature of the disease, it is especially important that advance directives be considered while the person with dementia can be involved in making decisions for himself. Once the severe stage is reached it may become necessary to decide whether to continue treating or curing any illness that the person with dementia has or whether to begin palliative (treating pain without trying to cure) care. Without an advance directive, life-prolonging measures may still be performed, even though hope of recovery is gone. Note, if there is disagreement among family members and there is no advance directive, it may be necessary for the court to appoint a guardian to be decision maker.
The Area Agency on Aging sponsors services to support non-paid caregivers of frail older adults who need services to maintain independent living.

If you are a caregiver and need help, contact the **Johnson County Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)** Information Specialist at **913-715-8861**.

The AAA works with community-based organizations to provide services for caregivers. These services are funded under the Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP). There is no fee to the caregiver for these services but donations are appreciated.

**FCSP Services** may include:

- **Respite Care**
- **Supplemental Services** – These services, attendant/person care, bathroom items, chore, homemaker, flex, repair/maintenance/renovation, transportation, are provided on a limited basis to complement the care provided by the caregivers.
- **Services may also be available for Grandparents or Relative Caregivers.**

### HELPFUL WEBSITES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Johnson County Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)</th>
<th><strong>Family Caregiver Alliance</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aging &amp; Accessibility Directory</strong></td>
<td><strong>National Institute on Aging</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAA publications and directories</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nia.nih.gov">www.nia.nih.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.jocogov.org/dept/human-services/area-agency-aging/caregiver-support">http://www.jocogov.org/dept/human-services/area-agency-aging/caregiver-support</a></td>
<td><strong>Hospice Foundation of America</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS)</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.hospicefoundation.org/caregivers">www.hospicefoundation.org/caregivers</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kdadks.gov">www.kdadks.gov</a></td>
<td><strong>National Cancer Institute</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking Care of Yourself — Fatigue

Fatigue is a common problem for people who are recovering from illness—and their caregivers. Here are three ways to manage fatigue and have a better quality of life:

1. Find out why you are experiencing fatigue by keeping a diary to record specific activities that may be causing your fatigue. It will help you discuss with your doctor what you normally do during the day so he can help identify what causes your fatigue and suggest new ways to manage your daily routine.

2. Plan your daily activities. This is important to help minimize your stress and fatigue. List down everything you might need for the day, and make sure you include your medications, food, and water.

3. Eat healthy energy-packed foods, especially if you have a lot of activities during the day.

Inspiration

A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures.
— Irish Proverb

Live Life Laughing!

Every time I think I can make ends meet, they move the ends.

Memory Care - The Power of Choice

Dementia can strip individuals of their ability to control their world. Small choices become very important. The more choices they can make for themselves, the more control they feel. And the more control they feel, the greater the sense of independence and self-esteem they enjoy.
The Aging Network

As a result of 1973 amendments to the 1965 Older Americans Act, federal funding is provided for a network of agencies to coordinate services for the growing population of older Americans. This network includes the federal Administration for Community Living (ACL), state administrative units on aging, more than 655 nationwide Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), and thousands of community-based senior centers and nutrition sites.

The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) is the state administrative unit that oversees the operation of 11 state AAAs. Although most AAAs are private, not-for-profit agencies operating in multiple counties, the Johnson County AAA is a public not-for-profit operating as a unit of Johnson County Human Services.

For detailed information, visit www.jocogov.org/hsd.

Aging and Disability Resource Center

The Area Agency on Aging hosts your local Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), where people can turn for information, assistance, and a single point of entry to public long-term support programs and benefits. ADRCs provide unbiased, reliable information and options assistance to persons eligible for Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) for Frail Elderly, Physical Disabilities and Traumatic Brain Injuries, as well as assessment services for persons considering a move to a nursing facility.

Receive services or be of service. Both are easy!

Begin receiving aging services. To learn more about any of the services provided through the Johnson County AAA, call an aging information specialist at 913-715-8861.

Become a volunteer. Consider joining the network of dedicated volunteers who help senior adults live in the Johnson County community with independence, dignity, and hope. Volunteers may choose activities that meet their interests and time schedules. The AAA’s priority volunteer program is Meals on Wheels. Call the coordinator of Volunteer Services at 913-715-8859 to learn more or to become a volunteer.

AAA Programs

- **Aging Information and Assistance.** Aging information specialists provide timely, updated facts about aging issues and services over the phone, through email, or in person by appointment.

- **Publications about Aging.** A variety of print and electronic materials provide important information of interest to senior adults and family caregivers.

- **The Best Times**, a quarterly newsmagazine, is available to Johnson County residents 60 and older. The Best Times provides vital information about aging services, programs, organizations, activities, and issues. The publication is also available online. Contact 913-715-8930 concerning subscriptions.
AAA Programs

• Caregiver Support. Services to support non-paid caregivers of frail older adults who need services to maintain independent living.

• Homemaker/chore programs. Ongoing assistance with the upkeep and cleanliness of the home, shopping, and occasional heavy-duty cleaning are available through these programs.

• Medication management. Nurses visit private homes regularly to setup medications and monitor their use.

• Assessment. An in-home meeting with a potential client to determine needs for services. Additional assistance may be provided to coordinate multiple services if needed.

• Nutrition Services. Adults 60 and older in Johnson County have three dining options, based on their needs and preferences. Each meal provides a minimum of one-third of the daily nutritional requirements.

  CHAMPSS: A senior dining option to augment meals at Senior Nutrition Centers, CHAMPSS provides greater time flexibility and more extensive menu selections at local grocery stores. Call 913-715-8894 for information regarding enrollment.

  Meals on Wheels: Volunteers deliver nutritious meals Monday through Friday to senior adults who are homebound.

  Senior Nutrition Centers: Nutritious meals are served at 11:30 a.m. five days a week at six centers. The centers offer friendship, education, fitness, and opportunities for socializing.

  De Soto
  32905 W. 84th St.  913-585-1762
  Gardner
  128 E. Park St.  913-856-3471
  Lenexa
  13425 Walnut St.  913-888-6141
  Merriam/Shawnee
  5701 Merriam Drive  913-677-2048
  Overland Park
  8101 Marty St.  913-648-2949
  Roeland Park
  4850 Rosewood Drive  913-826-3139
  Spring Hill
  401 N. Madison St.  913-592-3180

• Legal services. Seniors receive access to legal consultation and representation, education, and assistance with access to government benefits.

• Personal care. Attendants help senior adults with bathing, grooming, and other personal care.

• Respite care. An in-home substitute caregiver or adult day care can provide temporary relief for non-paid caregivers.

• A private pay care management service is offered through the ADRC. This service assists those who need help in setting up services for seniors in Johnson County.

For information on programs call 913-715-8861
QUICK QUIZ

Financial planning will assure that the property of the person in your care—no matter how little he or she has—goes to the people he or she choose as quickly and as cheaply as possible. Read the issue and answer True or False to the questions below.

1. Long-term planning will help you and the person with Alzheimer’s feel more secure, no matter what the future brings.
   T F

2. A will is a legal document that spells out how money and property is to be given out after death.
   T F

3. When planning for the future, expert advice can be helpful, as the laws change and depend on where you live.
   T F

4. Conservatorship is a legal proceeding in which the court names an individual to handle another’s finances when that person becomes unable to do so.
   T F

5. It is important to decide how future health care, legal, and financial decisions will be made before the person with dementia can’t participate.
   T F

6. You can wait until the late stage of Alzheimer’s for the person to prepare a letter of instructions.
   T F

7. Dementia can strip individuals of their ability to control their world, so small choices become very important.
   T F

8. A court must find a person to be mentally incapacitated and in need of someone to step in as decision-maker before a guardian will be appointed.
   T F

9. Fatigue is generally not a problem for caregivers and those recovering from illness.
   T F

10. Financial and health care decisions should be recorded in legal documents to make sure the family has enough information about the wishes of the person in their care.
    T F

Name ___________________________________________________________

Signature __________________________________ Date ____________________
If the person in your care did not choose someone to act on his behalf when he was still competent, it may be necessary for you to formally become his guardian so you can make decisions on his behalf.

A legal action, Conservatorship, seeking appointment of a guardian will avoid conflict with others who may not agree with your decisions and empower you to act for the person in your care. This will involve a court procedure for which you will need legal representation. A court must find a person to be mentally incapacitated and in need of someone to step in as decision-maker before a guardian will be appointed on his or her behalf.

The responsibilities of a guardian may include deciding where the person lives, the personal and medical care he or she receives, and how his financial resources are used.

**Tip** Keep in the safe-deposit box—original will, deeds, passport, stock and bond certificates, birth and marriage certificates, insurance policies. Keep at home—a copy of the will.