

TIPS TO REMEMBER ON LEGAL ISSUES

- Find a lawyer who can help you establish a will or estate plan for your relative. A lawyer can also provide strong advice on other key developments in the life of your loved one.
- Discuss with your relative important financial aspects such as the location of documents, gaining access to their banking accounts, and stepping in to take over any financial responsibilities they may have.
- Look into the possibility of becoming the power of attorney for your loved one if they become incapable of caring for themselves.
- A living will can provide an end of life decision for your loved one should they become terminally ill. This pivotal paper can tell a doctor just how much or how little care the person wishes to receive.
- Talk with other family members about the intentions of your relative and ask their advice should you feel unsure about any matter.
- Have your attorney distribute the proper documents to the doctors, banks, and health care providers of your relative.
- Understand what your loved one's insurance plan calls for in the event of hospitalization or hospice care.
- Be upfront with your relative about your feelings behind the decisions you make, and allow for them to offer their advice should they be of sound mind.
- Find out what financial protection is offered for your loved one when it comes to their Social Security and pension benefits.
- Contact local agencies that deal with legal protection of the elderly and see what services they can provide.



Navigating the Health Care system

As a care giver, moving through the maze to find out what kind of services are available to you can be daunting. Since each of the Side by Side Care givers may have different circumstances, there is some difficulty in pinpointing who you should contact for assistance. Here are some resources to help you.

Google the Province of BC Caregiver Respite/Relief - this produced a page from the Side by Side Newsletter Volume 1-Issue 2page 1

Health Care system in BC on respite care.

Google Fraser Health Authority Home and Community Services ALSO

<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/your-care/home-and-community-care/eligibility/>

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/caring-for-seniors>

“Better at Home” is a program that helps seniors remain independent and connected to their community. It provides simple non-medical support services that are provided by volunteers, staff or contractors. The program is managed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland and funded by the Government of BC.

For more information: To find out which program is in your area, visit the “Find your Community” on website: www.betterathome.ca.

MORE RESOURCES

www.bcli.org/elder-law-resources/execsum

Caregivers Association of BC (CABC)
#604-734-4812 www.caregiverbc.ca

Family Caregivers BC
www.family/caregiversbc.ca

Tips when hiring a paid caregiver or agency:

Google: http://www.thefamilycaregiver.com/bc/articles_resources/article_view.php?

HINTS ON BEING RESILIENT DURING A BIPOLAR CRISIS

Reducing stress in a bipolar crisis Caregivers can feel exhausted and overwhelmed when going through an illness-related crisis. Sometimes the effect of the crisis can linger after it is over.

Ways to reduce stress in an illness related crisis:

- Keep a list of contact numbers of people you can call for help in an emergency
- Reassure yourself that the crisis will pass.
- If you are feeling very stressed during and after a crisis, talk to someone you trust or contact a helpline.
- Schedule a bit of time to relax and unwind after the crisis, even if you are very busy.
- Try to restore your usual routine as soon as possible.
- If some time after the crisis you can't stop thinking about what happened, you feel distressed and unable to focus on everyday tasks, consider getting professional counseling

What to do if the person is ill, irritable, and very critical of you

- It may help to detach from the situation a little by reminding yourself that the person is ill.
- Don't try to defend yourself by arguing logically with the person if they have become so ill that they are not thinking as rationally as they usually do.
- Address the specific comments or behavior (e.g. shouting) that are unacceptable or concerning, without criticizing or blaming the person as an individual.
- Set limits with the person's verbal abuse by saying something like “I understand you're upset but I'm not going to tolerate being spoken to in this way” and walk away.
- Take some time out or talk things through with someone you trust to help maintain your perspective, and don't be drawn into reacting to their irritability or believing the criticism.

Source: A guide for caregivers of people with bipolar disorder {Lesley Berk, Anthony Jorm, Claire Kelly, Michael Berk, Seetal Dodd and the clinicians, caregivers and people with bipolar disorder who helped to develop this guide University of Melbourne