

Sarah and John

Sarah and John are each 72 years old, enjoying retirement and travel. All was going great until John presented with a few symptoms like fatigue, dizziness, and sleeplessness at his Medicare Annual Wellness visit. An appointment was made for a full physical exam. After a physical exam, bloodwork and some medical tests the Dr. diagnosed John with Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's disease is a progressive disease of the nervous center, it is associated with the degeneration of the basal ganglia of the brain and a deficiency of the neurotransmitter dopamine. It sometimes takes years to seriously progress and leave the person dependent for care.

Sarah had her Medicare Annual Wellness visit and her Annual Physical, all is well, no signs of symptoms of illness.

Both Sarah and John have longevity in their family. Sarah's mother is still living independently at 94 years old, her husband died 8 years ago from heart disease. John's Dad is 92 and lives in Luxury Living ALF, his wife died 2 years ago from breast cancer.

Sarah and John own their home jointly (value \$350,000- no mortgage), a joint checking with \$78,000, a jointly owned brokerage account of \$185,000 and John's IRA of \$335,000.

Sarah and John have made an appointment to review long term care planning – what would you be discussing with them?

Betty and Bob

Betty, 73 years old and Bob, 75 years old were lucky to find each other, fall in love and are now married. Betty has 3 children from her 1st marriage and 1 from her second marriage. Her first husband died, she divorced her 2nd husband after 20 years, and now has married Bob.

Bob was a widower, married to the love of his life for over 50 years and has 3 children, unfortunately estranged from one of them.

Betty and Bob were doing great until Betty had a severe stroke. She worked hard in rehab; however, Betty is still incontinent of bowel and bladder and Bob just can't handle her taking care of her at home. It looks like she is going to require nursing home care for a long time.

Betty and Bob thankfully did a prenuptial agreement, what's his stays his and what's hers stays her. The home is Betty's.

Betty has the following assets, her home (valued at \$450,000), a checking account with \$38,000, an IRA account with \$550,000. Betty receives direct deposit of Social Security of \$2,100/month into the checking account.

Bob has approximately \$1.2M in a brokerage account (non-retirement) and a checking account of \$245,000.

Bob is Betty's Agent under her Durable Power of Attorney. The nursing home referred him to a Medicaid planner that told him he should cash in Betty's IRA right away. Bob called Betty's financial planner and she said before you cash in the IRA you should speak with an Elder Law Attorney. Bob wants to know what his next step is.

What do you recommend?

Susan (a widow)

Susan has been a widow for many years. She is fortunate to still have her son, Sam and daughter Julie living within 10 miles of her home. Sam is 48 years old, disabled through Social Security, and still able to live independently. He loves his mom, but has been in a funk for a few years, mostly stays at home and doesn't go out much. He calls Susan at least once a month to check in and visits on holidays and birthdays.

Julie literally does everything for Susan, eats dinner with her at least 3 nights per week, accompanies her to all her dr. visits, takes her grocery shopping and makes sure she gets to all of the best shows at Ruth Eckerd.

Susan recently has declined in health, and her memory loss has become increasingly worse. She is not taking care of herself, doesn't always recognize Julie when she comes to the home, and is never hungry and eats very little. Last week she left the kitchen sink water on and flooded the kitchen.

Many years ago, Susan named Julie and Sam as her Co-Agents under the DPOA because she didn't want to play favorites. Julie wants to make an appointment to meet with the Elder Law attorney and Sam says go ahead and go but I'm not going.

Susan owns her own home (no mortgage), has approximately \$255,000 in her checking account and receives monthly Social Security of \$1,550. Julie is not sure whether Susan should go to memory care or to a nursing home and doesn't have a clue how to pay for it. Some friends have told her it cost over \$10,000 per month for care.

What recommendations would you make to Julie?