

Preparing for Elder-Care Emergencies

With the population of frail, aged people in need of daily care continuing to rise, more employees will face what seems like a problem with no solution: Planning for the unplannable.



While child-care problems get more attention in the workplace, the emergencies that beset the aged such as a fall, a stroke, dementia or a life threatening debilitating disease, tend to be more disruptive, forcing working caregivers to drop everything and rush to the scene. If you are a caregiver, here are some things to keep in mind.

- Keep on top of your work to avoid a backlog in the event you need to take off at a moment's notice.
- Keep a calendar with details of projects or files you are working on and list contacts for reference so co-workers can pick up the ball.
- Inform your employer of your situation and know your company's policy for time off.
- If you are a perfectionist and used to doing everything on your own, learn to ask others for help.
- Have your parents' medical information available, which should include a summary of insurance plans, medications, doctors, and medical history.
- Make sure your parents have updated estate planning documents in place.
- Have readily available the contact information for your parents' attorney, tax preparer and/or financial advisor.
- Understand and make peace with your limits. It is often a very hard decision to admit a parent to a nursing home.

Here are some resources for elder care:

1. www.caregiver.org – research, guide to programs
2. www.aginglifecare.org – help in finding a geriatric care manager
3. www.caregiving.org – advocacy, research
4. www.caregiveraction.org - support, networking tools

Contact Mary Ann Jacobs, Esq. at majacobs@ritter-randolph.com or Joseph Zoimen, Esq. at izoimen@ritter-randolph.com for assistance with any elder care issues.