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## Southeastern Connecticut Senior Services Guide

Obtaining help for a family member who needs assistance with daily living can seem overwhelming. Perhaps a family member living alone can no longer cook or manage their medications ... or perhaps the person has a progressive disease like Alzheimer's ... or has had a stroke or a heart attack.

At times like these, you need to understand all of the available options. You can make the right choices for you and your loved one if you dedicate yourself to obtaining helpful information.

To assist families who face this difficult situation, our firm has published its first-ever Southeastern Connecticut Senior Services Guide. This free Guide will provide you with pertinent, local information and answers to questions which we deal with on a daily basis.

Let me give you a tour of our Senior Services Guide. We begin in Chapter 1 by discussing the bewildering array of Senior Care Options. Not only are there assisted living facilities and skilled nursing facilities (nursing homes), but seniors can choose home health care, adult day care, senior housing, shared housing, age-restricted retirement communities, congregate care, and continuing care retirement communities.

We talk of the importance of care planning in Chapter 2. We encourage identification of the senior's medical, social, spiritual, and psychological needs as well as the senior's special preferences and usual routines. This information helps care providers understand what the senior needs to live a safe and enjoyable life.

Chapter 3 focuses on caring for the senior at home. The Guide discusses how best to manage care providers and optimize the services they provide. We summarize government programs that pay for home care, including important telephone numbers to access those programs.

We discuss continuing care retirement communities in Chapter 4. CCRCs have both independent living and a nursing home on the premises. Whether a senior is considering StoneRidge, Essex Meadows, or other CCRCs, you need to know the right questions to ask and what to consider. The Guide provides a detailed checklist that will help you focus your investigation.

Chapter 5 takes a closer look at assisted living facilities. In Connecticut, an assisted living facility consists of a managed residential community (MRC) registered with the Department of Public Health and an assisted living services agency (ALSA) *licensed* with the Department of Public Health. The MRC is the landlord and the ALSA provides nursing and care services. We clarify the differences between assisted living facilities and nursing homes and continuing care retirement communities. We also provide a checklist that can assist you in comparing assisted living facilities. The checklist covers everything from finance, care services, and living accommodations to food, staffing, and social and recreational activities.

Next, we turn to nursing homes. Chapter 6 describes the services provided in nursing homes and how to get good care there. We provide an evaluation form to help you compare nursing homes. The evaluation form provides you with the questions you need to ask about residents' concerns, the staff and family considerations.

In Chapter 7, we provide a framework for comparing the costs of living and receiving care at home with the cost of an assisted living facility, nursing home, or a continuing care retirement community. To compare costs, you need to gather cost information for each option and tally the numbers.

Chapter 8 provides valuable contact information for local home health care providers, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and continuing care retirement communities. Armed with this information, you can begin contacting local facilities and gathering the information you need to make a decision.

In the final Chapter, we provide a list of attorneys in Southeastern Connecticut who are members of the National Academy of Elder

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Law Attorneys (NAELA). NAELA members focus their practice on elder law. Given the cost and time commitment involved in caregiving, it makes sense to seek legal assistance from elder law attorneys who can help with these important decisions.

If you would like a copy of our Southeastern Connecticut Senior Services Guide, give us a call or send us a letter. We will mail or e-mail you a copy of the Guide for your use. If you need assistance with preserving family assets and evaluating the available options, give us a call to set an appointment.

*At Cipparone & Zaccaro, PC, we have over 25 years of experience handling probate estates, estate planning, and real estate matters. Give us a call if you or anyone you know needs assistance with an estate, an estate plan or a real estate transaction.*

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