

Get Your Affairs in Order

Published in the Daily Mercury on Wednesday, 23 September 2015



This week some colleagues and I attended an information forum hosted by the Alzheimer's Association in Mackay.

I noticed after talking to members of the community through this forum, that while we often have the best of intentions to get our affairs in order, it just sometimes does not get sorted out in time. Our lives and circumstances can change so rapidly, regardless of our age.

When speaking with the audience, I explained that there are really two ends of the spectrum, both of which I have had first hand experiences with.

You can have the model client; the client who has all of their affairs in order leaving as little as possible to chance. A family member of mine was exactly that, he knew he was ill and rather than leave his wife with the burden of trying to decide what he "would have wanted" he left instructions and set things up to prevent her having to make even more tough decisions when the time came to say goodbye.

The other end of the scale is the client who has lost capacity, without having their affairs in order. Loss of capacity does not discriminate. Being left without the ability to make decisions could happen to anyone. From a young person who has been involved in an accident, to a person diagnosed with dementia or a similar illness.

What really surprised me was some of the statistics quoted in relation to those who are suffering from dementia or related illnesses in our communities. An example was given of a person who was under 30 years of age and had suffered the life altering impacts of dementia.

What I am saying is that our circumstances can change in the blink of an eye. Don't leave your wishes to chance. It is a simple process which can be carried out once you turn 18. Sit down, think about who you want by your side, and make an appointment with a solicitor to finalise your Enduring Power of Attorney.

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Elsbeth's articles can be accessed on the Daily Mercury website at <http://www.dailymercury.com.au/topic/elsbeth-ledwy/> or you can find Elsbeth's column "Mind Your Own Business" in the Daily Mercury newspaper each Wednesday.



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