

**JULIE OSTERHOUT**

*Certified Elder Law Attorney  
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**LANCE MCKINNEY**

*Certified Elder Law Attorney*

**BETH PRATHER**

*Certified Elder Law Attorney  
Certified Circuit Civil Mediator*

**BRITTON G. SWANK**

*Elder Law Attorney*

If you have clients who need assistance with finding the right place for their ill family member to live and determining how to pay for it, ***we can assist them with becoming eligible for Medicaid.***

If you have clients who are unable to care for themselves and make their own decisions, ***we can assist their loved ones with becoming their guardian.***

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## WORDS TO THE WISE

September 2007

### Florida Rep. Introduces Bill

Congressman Tim Mahoney from Palm Beach Gardens has introduced a bill to streamline the administrative process used to approve Section 202 projects. The Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program is the only H.U.D. program specifically designed to tackle low-income housing for seniors. Today, the number of federally subsidized housing units devoted to low-income elderly is about half what it was in 1995. Congressman Mahoney's bill makes it easier for non-profit organizations to obtain outside funding; allows property owners to seek financing to repair and improve current housing, while keeping costs low for their residents; and allows adjustments to rental assistance contracts to allow for changing project costs and emergencies such as utility cost spikes.

Sources: [www.palmbeachpost.com/localnews/content/nation/epaper/2007/09/06/housing0907.html](http://www.palmbeachpost.com/localnews/content/nation/epaper/2007/09/06/housing0907.html)  
[www.mahoney.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=234](http://www.mahoney.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=234)

### Psychiatric Advance Directives

An advanced directive, as defined by Florida Law, is a witnessed written document or oral statement giving instructions concerning any aspect of the principal's health care. Laws authorizing advanced directives have been enacted in all 50 states, but only 12 specifically authorize psychiatric advance directives. Several state laws, such as in Florida, do reference psychiatric treatment, but only to the extent of limiting the health care decision maker's (health care surrogate's) ability to make decisions about certain types of treatment. For example, unless specifically authorized in writing or with court authority, a health care surrogate cannot provide consent for psychosurgery, electroshock therapy, or voluntary admission to a mental health facility. For more information on this topic, visit the National Alliance on Mental Illness website at

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

Source: [www.nami.org/Content/ContentGroups/Legal/Advance\\_Directives.htm](http://www.nami.org/Content/ContentGroups/Legal/Advance_Directives.htm)

#### Save the Date!

Attorney Beth Prather will be speaking on November 7<sup>th</sup> at Arden Court at a Caregiver Education series designed to meet the needs of family caregivers. The series is sponsored by Lee Memory Care and hosted by Arden Court. Session dates are October 31, November 7<sup>th</sup> and November 14<sup>th</sup> and each session lasts from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. Arden Court is located at 15950 McGregor Blvd. in Ft. Myers. Seating is limited so please call Adele at 334-5857 to reserve your spot.