

## *The Value of Professional Guidance*

Educating yourself about long-term care options can be a challenging exercise. It's one of those things that many people don't even think about until there is a need. Thus, it often turns into a crisis response that families have to cram to learn about in a short period of time.

That also means that those of us working in long-term care interact with a lot of stressed-out individuals who are scrambling to make good decisions with a limited amount of information. Not exactly a formula for positive outcomes.

Having a seasoned professional help you navigate through this process is critical to a successful outcome. A skilled professional will simplify the process and guide you to competent decisions that will serve both you and your family. They will:

- help you understand your situation, lay out options and provide resources that match your needs
- fill in gaps in your knowledge base so you're better equipped to make informed decisions
- guide you to the key questions you need to ask. (This will result in fewer surprises later.)
- take the time to listen and empathize with the caregiver. (This is the person who is often overlooked in the process and whom without, everything else is likely to fall apart.)

I've said many times that I believe the greatest fear for any of us is "fear of the unknown". What we

don't understand can be paralyzing. Having a professional on your team can be a game changer. Suddenly you have someone you can turn to for answers to some of the unknown. With their expertise they can give you confidence that you're on the right path. They can begin to silence that voice in your head that continually reminds you of all the possible mistakes you can make. Once they give you reasonable options you can make a decision feeling empowered.

So how will you know when you've found the right person to guide you? You'll know when:

- they ask more than they tell. (Until they really understand your story how can they possibly give you answers?)
- you realize you're learning things you didn't understand before
- you're getting guidance and not a sales pitch
- they take the time to ask how you are doing, and what your thoughts are related to the situation

If you have yet to find that trusted professional, I encourage you to consider calling Laureate Cares at 262-832-7113. It's a free call, where you'd be speaking to a seasoned professional who has a minimum of 20 years in long-term care.

This is an important decision that you want to get right. The good news is you don't need to be alone in this decision making process.

*This article is a reprint of a blog posted by Adele Lund, Laureate Group's Director of Community and Business Relations*

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*For over 40 years, Laureate Group, a local, family owned business has been helping older adults and their families manage the challenges of aging. Laureate Group operates eight senior communities*

*throughout the Greater Milwaukee area. Additional resources can be found at:*

*blog.laureategroup.com • www.laureategroup.com • Laureate Cares: 262-832-7113*