

# Solicitors For The Elderly

SFE was launched in 1999 as a legal organisation in which solicitors and other legal professionals with an interest in advising older people could work together to share knowledge and expertise in this increasingly complex area of advice.

This provision of a forum for shared knowledge has helped to ensure that SFE members are able to deliver high quality legal advice to older people, their families and carers.

In addition to this SFE provides a comprehensive training programme to support members to keep up to date with legal developments and current thinking. The members advise in many areas of private law relevant to older and vulnerable adults, their families' and carers' needs and concerns.

This includes the traditional areas of legal advice such as wills but importantly includes being able to provide assistance when people are making care related decisions which is an area of increasing concern to many people. Typical questions might be:

- \* Am I responsible for funding my own care?
- \* Have I been correctly assessed as not being eligible for local authority care and support?
- \* Will I have to sell my house to pay for care?
- \* Should my care be funded by the National Health Service and therefore free?

Our members can help with these and many other social care questions. Their areas of expertise include:

- \* Care matters including entitlement to care and support and liability for care funding
- \* Powers of Attorney
- \* Wills and trusts
- \* Probate
- \* Court of Protection work
- \* Inheritance tax planning
- \* Dealing with abuse of vulnerable people

All SFE Full Accredited Members must have experience and specialise in a wide range of legal issues affecting older and vulnerable people. Our members must have spent a substantial amount of their time working for older clients and have to fulfil our own criteria for membership.

To become a Full Accredited Member of SFE, members must continue to keep their training in this area of the law up to date and are also required to complete the SFE Older Client Care in Practice Award. This is an externally accredited award, which demonstrates that our members have the additional skills needed to work with older and vulnerable clients.

This is a unique qualification and truly sets SFE members apart from all other lawyers and advisers. In addition to this all members are required to follow the SFE code of practice.

All SFE members are expected to provide high quality legal advice to their older and vulnerable costs. They will do this as cost efficiently and effectively as they can, but above all, their advice will always be in the best interests of older and vulnerable clients, respecting their dignity and will take into account their need for a holistic approach to problem solving.

They will endeavour to follow a plain English policy i.e. will communicate in easy, understandable language and will explain any necessary legal terminology.



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