

Everyone benefits from taking time for future planning. In addition to financial planning for retirement, discuss and document your health care preferences with loved ones. Proactive financial and health care planning ensures peace of mind for you and your family members. Receiving a diagnosis of Parkinson's may result in re-examination of plans or focus for the future, such as time with family and friends, travel, or hobbies. Open communication with others is important as you readjust priorities. As you begin to sort out your feelings, it is important to consider long term financial and health care planning now.

### **Financial Planning:**

There are several financial guides to assist you in financial planning for the future:

- Trust- legally appoints a *trustee* to distribute goods and properties to other *beneficiaries*; if a large amount of property or assets are owned, monies and goods can be distributed while a person is still alive.
- Will- similar to a trust, but monies and goods are only distributed after a person's death.
- Durable Power of Attorney- Names a person to serve as his or her representative in financial and/or personal matters, including specific instructions regarding an estate.

### **Health Planning:**

It is important to openly discuss individual plans and wishes in the event that you, or a family member, are unable to voice preferences in a medical emergency. This information should be shared with the medical team, and copies of appropriate forms should be placed in the medical chart. Legal tools to guide health care wishes:

- Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care- Names a person to make decisions regarding your health (also known as a health care agent) in event of serious illness or medical emergency.
- Advanced Directive- provides written directions regarding personal preferences for future medical treatments, and also can name a health care agent(s) to make decisions. Forms to complete these documents can be obtained through your health care team or lawyer.

### **Involving Your Team:**

- Your medical team of doctors, nurses, rehab therapists, and social workers can help you live well with Parkinson's. Establish healthy relationships by learning about each team member's role and understanding how to access their services when needed. Ask questions and state your concerns to help each team member meet your personal needs.