

# How Retirement Planning Often Misses the Mark

PUBLISHED ON  
**April 19, 2023**

---

When people plan for retirement, they usually think about money. They focus on having enough savings and enjoying activities they normally put off prior to retirement. Some even think about living at home rather than a care facility while others express concern about becoming a burden on their families.

Many individuals want to stay at home as they age, avoid burdening their families, and avoid depleting their hard-earned assets on long-term care. However, the majority of us will fail to accomplish any of those goals. For example, the [Pennsylvania Health Care Association](#) reports that approximately 70% of Pennsylvanians currently turning 65 will require long-term care in their lifetime and will receive that care for an average of three years. Very often that care occurs in a care facility, not their home.

Why the disconnect? In part, we often avoid confronting difficult topics. Thoughts of growing old are unsettling. It's common to simply push those thoughts out of our minds in the hopes of everything falling into place or a loved one coming to the rescue. Another part of the problem is that our retirement planning tends to focus only on building up our savings, and on death, who inherits our assets when we die (wills and trusts), how we want to die (living wills), and who will manage our money before we die (powers of attorney). These are all very important legal documents, but these traditional estate planning documents do not address goals regarding financial security, aging with dignity, building a care team, and control over our living arrangements.

The vast majority of people do not go into a nursing home because they want to, rather they are required to go - usually by people they've never met like hospital discharge coordinators. In fact, nursing homes and subacute rehabilitation hospitals are critical parts of our rehabilitation health system, so going to a nursing home is not the permanent placement it used to be. Staying there, however, is something else entirely. Permanent placement in a nursing home typically results when steps were not taken to create a home setting staffed with family and professionals offering proper care. Therefore, if home care is something that you are considering as you age, it's critical to start planning for that early.

Representing older adults means learning a lot about the aging process - how home care works, what Medicare does and doesn't pay for, how to interact positively with people with dementia, how to create safe homes that meet our needs as we age and how long-term care insurance works - which is all part of being an elder law attorney. Equally important, it is about empowering and uplifting conversations with clients that focus on meeting their goals and overcoming life's challenges.

Getting the right documents is important, but so are conversations. Sharing information, fears, aspirations and hopes is critical. Aging is a family experience. Some of us have a family willing to help while others must create a "family." No matter what your family situation is, Barley Snyder's elder law attorneys can help you navigate the conversations that go into developing a truly comprehensive retirement plan, not one just focused on how your IRA is invested. If you

have questions about long-term care and retirement planning or would like to discuss how to implement a plan tailored to your goals, please contact [me](#) or any member of the Barley Snyder [Elder Law](#) team.

## WRITTEN BY:

---



**William R. Blumer, CELA (Certified Elder Law Attorney)**

Partner

Tel: (610) 370-8107

Email: [wblumer@barley.com](mailto:wblumer@barley.com)