

# So what is Elder Law anyway?

**BY ROBERT C. ANDERSON**  
Certified Elder Law Attorney

Elder Law is a recognized legal specialty dealing with the many specific legal issues confronting retired persons as they age.

Elder Law is 20 years old — which is when the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys began. Since that time, NAELA has 4,500 members and each State Bar now has an Elder Law Section.

After law school graduation 26 years ago, I came to the Upper Peninsula to practice tax and estate planning. Ten years ago, after dealing with my father's decline from Parkinson's disease, I changed my practice to Elder Law. Traditional estate planning provides a death-time focus with the use of a Will or Trust to avoid probate and lessen taxes. Elder Law, on the other hand, addresses needs that arise before death — comprehensive planning for the



*elder care journey* — when almost all of us will need help during periods of illness, immobility or incapacity.

Elder Law firms employ a social worker or nurse to help clients *age in place* and advocate for quality care. They offer expertise in applying for Medicaid, Medicare and VA benefits to help defray the cost of long-term care.

“Be Prepared” is the motto of Elder Law — before the events of a crisis overtake you and your family. For more information, visit [www.naela.org](http://www.naela.org).

*Robert C. Anderson, a member of St. Peter's Cathedral and graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, is active with NAELA and has served over 6,000 families in the Upper Peninsula. His firm, the Elder Law Firm of Anderson Associates of 148 W. Hewitt, Marquette, MI 49855, has funded for this article. We have six offices throughout the Upper Peninsula. We can be reached at (887) 304-3119 or at [upelderlaw@upelderlaw.com](mailto:upelderlaw@upelderlaw.com). The designation of Certified Elder Law Attorney is awarded by the National Elder Law Foundation, which is accredited by the American Bar Association.*



**The Elder Law Firm of  
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