

I have worked in the Geriatric Mental Health Field for over 30 years, currently I'm Clinical Supervisor for an Enhanced Care Service Unit (ECS is a collaborative program between Adults and People with Disabilities and Mental Health [Health Systems] which treats/works with individuals who struggle with complex medical and psychiatric illness in secure nursing home settings). One of the biggest barriers to helping people stay in the least restrictive setting and safely reside in their communities is the lack of guardianship options. There are times when our program has to decline a placement due to no guardianship for the individual and/or when an individual has left the program, hospital or safe placement with tragic consequences. The ever growing number of individuals (young and old) who experience cognitive deficits that impair judgment and insight with a lack of resources to assist them is creating devastating human suffering and adding to the financial burden of an already ailing health system.