



**HOUGUM  
LAW FIRM, LLC**  
ESTATE PLANNING & ELDER LAW

**715.843.5001**  
info@hougumlaw.com

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**EMERGENCY** →

## **Medical Alert Systems Aren't Just For Seniors Who Live Alone**

There is a common misconception that medical alert systems are for frail, home-bound older adults. While that is true, medical alert systems have evolved in recent years to accommodate older adults with active lifestyles.

Medical alert systems have aided many people and saved countless lives over the past several decades, even though they have changed very little in the services they offer. A user can choose to wear a pin, bracelet, or lanyard with an emergency call button. This device connects remotely to an in-home central unit and, when the button is pressed, an emergency dispatcher talk through the home unit like a person on speaker phone.

Newer medical alert systems employ some of these characteristics, while also providing features that go well beyond the tried-and-true traditional model. With the explosion of technology, new mobile alert devices provide near limitless coverage for seniors who spend much of their time away from home. Let us provide a bit more information on this idea in this article.

Whereas home-based systems have a small range of emergency connectivity, mobile systems allow seniors to move about freely. Mobile alert devices come in traditional forms like pendants and bracelets, but function similarly to smartphones in that they rely on cellular networks to

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connect directly to emergency monitoring agents. These devices can be more practical than smartphones, which also have emergency capabilities built in, as long as seniors wear the mobile accessories. For instance, seniors can summon help if they slip in the shower, suffer from heat exhaustion, or have an allergic reaction to a medication impacting their speech. Many devices also come with fall sensors that will automatically trigger an alert if a fall-like motion is detected.

Mobile systems utilize a wider-range of technology features and options than in-home systems, such as GPS location. This is especially important if a senior loved one becomes lost, is easily confused, or struggles to communicate effectively. Some GPS systems even link to online maps that can share a senior loved one's physical location with their caregivers or adult children.

Thanks to new mobile technologies, senior adults who are concerned about these issues no longer have to be confined to their homes to use these important emergency safety systems.

We know this article may raise more questions than it answers for you. While it is not always easy or convenient to ensure that you or your aging loved ones have the necessary support, try to make time to address concerns as they arise. If you have questions about this or any elder care issue, we encourage you to schedule an appointment with attorney Alan Hougum.

## Tips on Protecting Your Minor Children This Summer

Receiving a diagnosis for a chronic condition can be both challenging and overwhelming for all parties involved. It can be difficult to know what steps to take next, as many aspects of you and your loved one's life may change. Being proactive and planning ahead is key to helping plan for your loved one's future care and prepare for challenges that may arise as a result of his or her chronic condition. To help ease your mind about the planning process, let us share with you a few tips to consider when planning for a loved one with a chronic condition.

### 1. Research the condition.

One of the most important first steps you can take when planning for a loved one with a chronic condition is to research the condition. Spend some time learning specific information about your loved one's condition, including how the condition manifests, how multiple conditions, if any, interact with one another, current treatment plans, and treatment plans that your loved one has previously tried. The more information you have, the easier it will be to prepare for your loved one's long-term care.

### 2. Review your current estate plan.

Next, we encourage you to review your current estate plan and long-term care plans, if you have created any. It is important to evaluate the circumstances you have already planned for and determine whether you have adequate protections in place, or if you need to update your planning documents. Be sure, for example, that you check your loved one's health care coverage, review your loved one's insurance, and have a durable power of attorney in place.



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### **3. Consult an experienced attorney.**

It can be difficult to know whether you have all of the planning documents you need. One of the most effective ways to help ensure your loved one is safe and protected is to discuss your loved one's specific needs with an experienced, local estate planning and elder law attorney. He or she can advise and guide you as to the steps you should be taking to plan for your loved one with a chronic condition.

These are just a few tips to help plan for loved ones with chronic conditions. We know this can be a challenging topic to think about. If this article raises more questions than it answers for you, do not wait to learn more on our website or contact us to schedule a meeting with attorney Alan Hougum.



305 S. 18TH AVENUE, SUITE 200  
WAUSAU, WISCONSIN 54401  
WWW.HOUGUMLAW.COM  
715-843-5001  
INFO@HOUGUMLAW.COM



Attorney Alan Hougum and his compassionate team will help you protect yourself and the people you love with strategic planning strategies, such as wills, asset protection and trusts, powers of attorney, estate trusts, elder law planning, Medicaid crisis planning, Medicaid eligibility and application, probate and estate administration, avoiding probate, charitable planning and giving, special needs, and estate tax planning. Hougum Law Firm, LLC, serves the entire Wausau, Wisconsin area.

Our office is located in Wausau at  
305 S. 18th Avenue, Suite 200, Wausau, Wisconsin 54401. Do you have questions you need answered before or after your appointment? Just let us know! Contact us by email at [info@hougumlaw.com](mailto:info@hougumlaw.com) or call us at 715-843-5001.