WHY & HOW TO GET A POWER OF ATTORNEY

- A Power of Attorney can be a great tool to receive help making financial & medical decisions.
- Some facilities require that patients have one.
- The best way to obtain a Power of Attorney is to go through a lawyer. The law has many requirements that must be followed for a valid Power of Attorney.
- A lawyer will also be able to explain what rights and responsibilities come with being a Principal and an Agent.

TO APPLY FOR LEGAL HELP:

1-800-326-9177
or
apply.midpenn.org

For more information about MidPenn Legal Services go to:

www.midpenn.org

This pamphlet contains general legal information and not specific legal advice. Although the information is believed to be accurate at the time of preparation, individual situations may require individual analysis, such that it may be advisable to consult with a lawyer. May 2023

Project SAFE
Safeguarding vulnerable populations Against Financial Exploitation
WHAT IS A POWER OF ATTORNEY

- A Power of Attorney allows an agent to make financial and/or medical decisions for the Principal.
- A Power of Attorney does not stop the Principal from making these decisions for themselves.
- A Principal may revoke a Power of Attorney at any time.
- Should an Agent steal money, the Principal may be able to sue the Agent in court.
- The Agent’s authority ends when the Principal passes away. An Agent cannot probate an estate unless they are also the Executor under the Principal’s Will.

WHO SHOULD BE MY AGENT?

- Someone you know well and would trust making financial and medical decisions for you.
- Typically, people will choose spouses, parents or children to be their Agent.

WHAT YOU NEED TO HAVE

- A general idea of all assets and debts that you own.
- A thought of who you would like your Agent to be.
- A discussion with the Agent prior to signing, making sure they are willing to take on this responsibility.
- A back-up agent in case your Agent cannot or will not perform their duties when needed.
- An up-to-date, valid state-issued ID that has your photograph.