Aaron's Acres hosted a virtual seminar on Financial Planning: What Every Caregiver Needs to Know. The 2 panelists were: Joanna Craney, a Financial Advisor/Special Needs Planner/Founder at Empowered Financial Strategies and Adam Earl, President at National Care Advisors. Covering this topic in a one-hour seminar can be overwhelming as there is a considerable amount of information to share. Both panelists stressed the following: there are resources available to support and assist you through this process; parents and caregivers don't have to figure this out by themselves. Topics touched upon during this seminar included: 3rd party special needs trusts, 1st party special needs trusts, a quality-of-life plan, government benefits, SSI, SSDI, and tax planning considerations.

Important takeaways from this seminar:

1) It is never too early to begin to plan, to have initial discussions with a financial planner.
2) It is important to talk with someone who specializes in special needs planning; general practitioners don't have expertise in this area.
3) One doesn't have to have considerable wealth to talk with a financial planner; it is more focused on given whatever your finances might be, how do you best plan for your child who has a disability (for when you are not here)
4) In planning for your child, you need to first make sure that your financial plan is in place for you (and spouse). When on an airplane, the flight attendant stresses the fact that you should first make sure you have the oxygen mask on before you take care of your child---the same holds true for financial planning.
5) They also discussed common planning mistakes and action steps to avoid them.

The mission of Empowered Financial Strategies is the following: to help busy families, business owners, and professionals organize their financial assets, protect what is important, reduce costs and taxes so that they can create maximum efficiency to build long-lasting wealth and legacy.

Their specialty is helping pre-retirees who are raising a child with special needs. They aim to build a plan to provide for their loved one's care and quality of life long-term, while simultaneously building a plan for their own retirement income and legacy. They understand how important it is to have your retirement plan built with safety valves so that your legacy to your loved one will be sustained.

National Care Advisors was founded, owned and staffed by nursing professionals, National Care Advisors is wholly focused on achieving optimal and sustainable quality of life for all. They have served individuals with complex care needs since 2008, offering:

- Life care planning
- Quality of life assessment
- Third party benefit analysis
- Education consulting
- Case management

Throughout the seminar, they encouraged attendees to reach out to either one of them to gain additional information or to ask questions about what was shared in their presentation. Their contact information is as follows:

Joanna Craney **E-mail:** Joanna@empowered-fs.com **Website**: https://www.empowered-fs.com/

Adam Earl **Email**: aearl@nationalcareadvisors.com **Website**: http://www.nationalcareadvisors.com