

# **Rethinking Guardianship: Exploring Less Restrictive Alternatives**

## **Program Description**

Older adults and people with disabilities may fall under full guardianship without consideration of their ability to make decisions with support. During this session, participants will be introduced to the concepts of choice and self-determination; the state's adult guardianship system; the ongoing work of Rethinking Guardianship NC; and how decision-making rights can be retained or regained through supported decision-making strategies.

## **Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this workshop, participants should be able to:

1. Explain the concepts of choice and self-determination and why they are important to any individual's sense of well-being.
2. Describe adult guardianship and how it works in North Carolina, noting how it takes away decision-making rights.
3. Name the goals and accomplishments of the NC Rethinking Guardianship initiative.
4. Identify the term "supported decision-making" and how it can be applied to long-term and everyday decisions.
5. Analyze ways in which supported decision-making and other decision-making tools can be applied outside of and in some situations, inside of a guardianship arrangement.
6. Discuss available resources and where to access them for professionals, patients, and families.

## **Target Audience**

Health care professionals; human service organizations; families and individuals who support or are interested in supporting older adults and adults with disabilities

## **Contact Hours**

2.0 credit hours

## **Program Agenda** (other time periods available)

9:00am – 9:10am – Introductions and Overview of Session

9:10am – 9:30am – Decision-Making, Choice & Self-Determination

9:30am – 9:50am – Adult Guardianship in North Carolina

9:50am – 10:15am – Rethinking Guardianship NC

10:15am – 10:25am – Stretch Break

10:25am – 10:50am – Supported Decision-Making & Other Less Restrictive Options

10:50am – 11:00am – Discussion and Wrap-Up

## **Faculty**

**Linda Kendall Fields, M.Ed.**, is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the UNC School of Social Work in Chapel Hill. She has dedicated over 35 years to building communities that are responsive to the needs and contributions of older adults, people with disabilities

and families in Minnesota, Oregon, Ohio, Georgia, and North Carolina. During her career, Linda has used Collective Impact and other community engagement strategies to lead numerous health care, nonprofit and government initiatives aimed at supporting individuals and families living in the community and transitioning to the community from long term care facilities. In her capacity at UNC Chapel Hill, and as Coordinator of the Cares Program, she has been facilitating the statewide *Rethinking Guardianship* initiative since 2016; assisting the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) in improving aging & adult services workforce training, implementing the *Dementia Capable North Carolina Strategic Plan*; and *Building Home & Community-Based Service Capacity* with NC Medicaid's Money Follow the Person (MFP) Program.