Contents

About the Authors vii
Preamble ix
Introduction xi

Chapter 1 Ethical Considerations When Representing Vulnerable Adults 1
Federal Statutes and Definitions 5
Ethical Responsibilities of Attorneys 7
Identifying the Client 10
Communications with a Client Who Has Diminished Capacity 11
Assessing the Client’s Capacity 12
If Diminished Capacity Is Believed to Be Present 15
What If One Suspects Elder Abuse? 18
Capacity and Defining the Lawyer’s Ethical Responsibilities 19
Conflicts in Representation 19
The Importance of These Issues from the Estate Planner’s Perspective 25
Observation of Risk Factors 28
Practice Guidelines When Capacity May Be an Issue 32
Guidelines When Vulnerability May Be an Issue 34

Chapter 2 To Understand Undue Influence, One Needs to Understand Capacity 39

Chapter 3 What Is Undue Influence? 47
Clinical vs. Legal Perspective 48
What Is Undue Influence? 48
Models That Address the Psychological Process of Undue Influence 50
A Statutory Definition of Undue Influence 51
Chapter 4  Evidence of Undue Influence 55
Direct vs. Circumstantial Evidence 56
Relevant Evidence 56
Importance of Circumstantial Evidence in Undue Influence Litigation 56
Indicia of Undue Influence 59
Models That Address Some of the Psychological Features of Undue Influence 64
Other Considerations 68
Chapter 5  Fraud and Duress Are Different Than Undue Influence 69
Fraud 70
Duress 75
Chapter 6  The Presumption of Undue Influence 79
What Is the Presumption of Undue Influence and Why Is It Important? 80
Relationships That Satisfy the Relationship Elements of the Presumption 82
Spousal Relationships and the Presumption 85
The Effect of the Presumption 87
Chapter 7  Rebutting the Presumption 89
Lawyers as Beneficiaries 94
The Effect of the Presumption Once Rebutted 101
Chapter 8  No-Contest Clauses and the Importance of Probable Cause 105
No-Contest Clauses Generally 107
What Is the “Probable Cause” Exception? 107
What Factors Should Be Considered in Determining Whether Probable Cause Exists? 109
At What Stage in a Proceeding May a Court Determine Whether Probable Cause Exists? 118
Chapter 9  A Litigation Perspective 121
It’s Not Only about the Money 122
Leveling the Playing Field 123
Case Perspective: Longitudinal vs. Acute 124
The Role and Importance of the Drafting Attorney in the Event of Litigation 126
The Importance of a Detailed Chronology and Development of a Discovery Plan 128