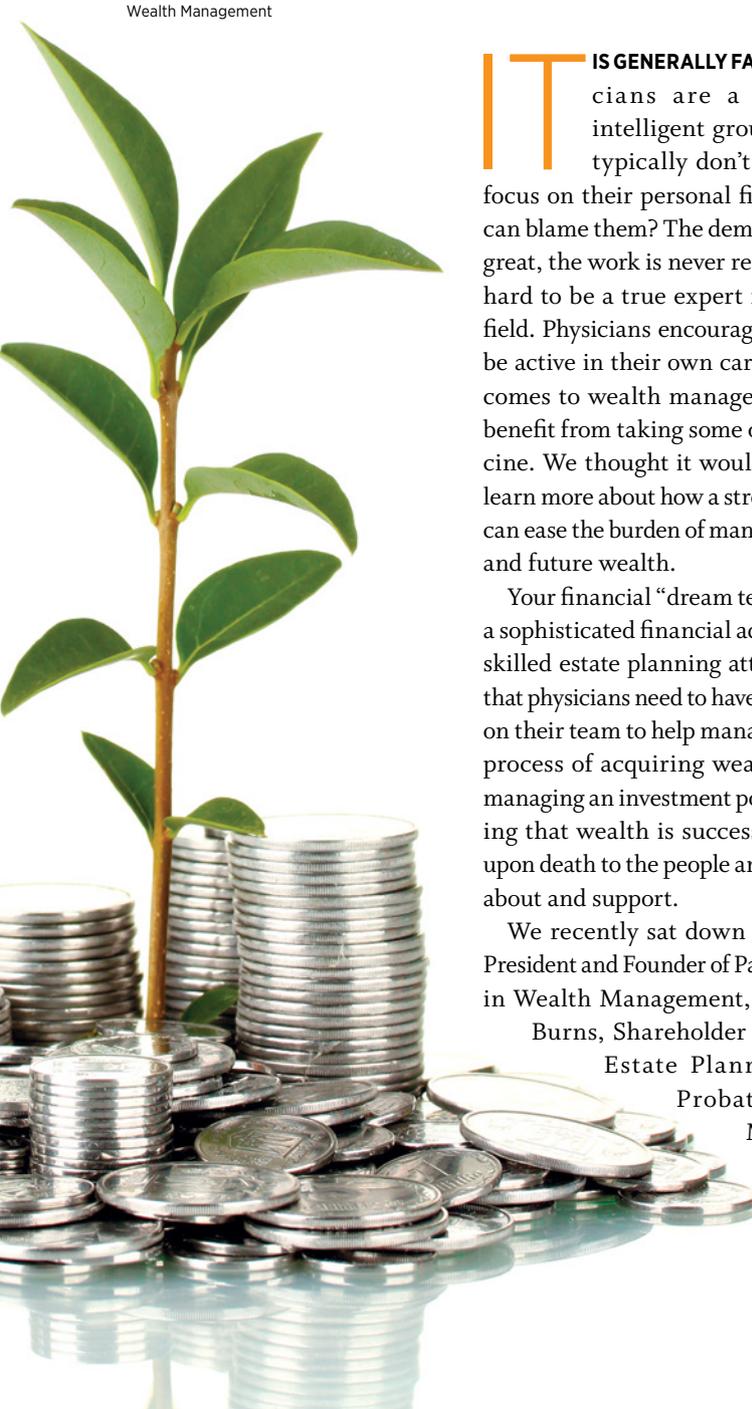




Bill Strand, Founder and Principal of Paradigm: Strategies in Wealth Management

Your Wealth-care Team: Partnering with Physicians to Grow, Manage and Transfer Wealth



IT IS GENERALLY FAIR to say that physicians are a well-educated, intelligent group of people who typically don't take the time to focus on their personal finances. And who can blame them? The demands of the job are great, the work is never really done, and it is hard to be a true expert in more than one field. Physicians encourage their patients to be active in their own care, and yet when it comes to wealth management, they could benefit from taking some of their own medicine. We thought it would be beneficial to learn more about how a strong financial team can ease the burden of managing your current and future wealth.

Your financial "dream team" requires both a sophisticated financial adviser and a highly skilled estate planning attorney. The fact is that physicians need to have both professionals on their team to help manage the career-long process of acquiring wealth, growing and managing an investment portfolio, and ensuring that wealth is successfully transferred upon death to the people and causes they care about and support.

We recently sat down with Bill Strand, President and Founder of Paradigm: Strategies in Wealth Management, and Christopher Burns, Shareholder and Chair of the Estate Planning, Trust and

Probate Group at the Minneapolis law firm of Henson & Efron. Bill and Christopher

work together on behalf of a number of physician clients and their families.

Financial advisers and estate planning attorneys both play a critical role for physicians.

"It boils down to being able to work as a seamless team and having good, clear communication," says Christopher. "Our focus is always to think and act proactively by collaborating on the best possible solutions for our physician clients — solutions based on very complex financial variables."

Unlike other professionals, physicians see life, death and trauma on a daily basis. Because of this, physicians generally understand better than most the critical nature of financial and estate planning.

"Estate planning is a process, not a set of documents," Bill says. "The process needs to involve collaboration between the wealth manager and the attorney collaboratively. Changes occur in every client's life and estate laws change as well. As a result, the estate plan needs to evolve accordingly. Once the financial plan is in place, we pull Christopher into the mix. Knowing that financial and estate planning documents are iterative, it is our job to drive discussions with our clients over time about when to change and update their estate documents. This happens every few years, and when it does, we re-engage with Christopher.

"Our job is to ensure that financial and estate planning documents reflect our clients' long-term goals in areas such as retirement, college funding, philanthropy, creating trusts, paying off school debt and myriad other areas," Bill adds. "We review the estate documents with clients on a regular basis to help them

better understand the intricacies of the estate planning documents and to make sure they are still consistent with the client's objectives."

From beneficiary designations and account titling, to funding trusts and tax planning, both professionals play a role.

"Handling complex financial details for hard-working physicians can be challenging," Bill says. "In both Christopher's practice and mine, our work has life-long implications."

"Serving as advisers for our clients, we take the trust and confidence they place in us very seriously," adds Christopher.

Physician Groups Can Benefit from Financial and Succession Planning

Another way the financial adviser/estate planning attorney team can add great value is by working with groups of independent physicians. Physician groups need to make decisions on qualified and non-qualified retirement plans, benefits, insurance, deferred compensation, and tax planning.

"Physician groups almost always need advanced planning in order to leverage profits and minimize tax implications inherent in a successful practice," says Bill. "Physicians today need to run their practices as businesses to best manage risk and maximize revenue for the practice and its partners."

When talking about the financial management of physician-owned practices, it is also important to acknowledge the need for a top-notch accountant.

"It is common for us to serve as the quarterback for our clients, coordinating the efforts of other advisers, including estate planning lawyers and accountants," Bill says. "This approach truly benefits our clients versus expecting them to work with advisers who don't talk to one another about their mutual client."

Top Five Financial and Estate Planning Priorities for Physicians

We asked Bill and Christopher to provide their "top five priorities" for

physicians. From an estate-planning perspective, attorney Christopher Burns suggests the following:

- + Don't procrastinate.

- + Think about what you want your legacy to be.

- + Hire an attorney who focuses his or her practice on this area of law.

- + Follow your attorney and financial advisers' advice on the titling of your assets and the coordination of your beneficiary designations.

- + Plan for the changing nature of state and federal estate tax laws as well as other changes to the law.

From a wealth management standpoint, Bill Strand's top priorities for his physician clients include:

- + Begin the wealth management process as soon as possible.

- + Meet with your wealth manager regularly to make sure you are engaged with all of the aspects of your financial situation.

- + Review your estate and financial planning documents on a regular basis. Don't shelve them for years without looking at them.

- + Make sure there is a strong collaborative relationship among your wealth manager, your attorney and your accountant.

- + Take a proactive role in portfolio planning and management.

Here's to Health and Wealth

Just as most patients benefit from the care of a diversified team of healthcare providers over the course of their lifetimes, so too will physicians who seek the guidance and oversight of a cohesive team of advisers to help manage

their financial health. Establishing a long-term relationship with a trusted financial adviser and estate planning attorney who know each other and work seamlessly together will ensure that the assets you've worked hard to earn and accumulate will be in good hands for generations to come.

Bill Strand, Founder and Principal, has more than 30 years of experience in the financial services industry and founded Paradigm: Strategies in Wealth Management LLC in 1995. He has particular expertise working with physicians, not only helping them achieve financial success but devising creative strategies to preserve the wealth they have worked so hard to build for themselves and their families. He meets a lot of physicians who are extremely busy practicing medicine but have no investment plan for financial independence. Find out more at planparadigm.com or by contacting Strand at 763-201-1025 or bstrand@planparadigm.com.

Christopher Burns is a Shareholder and Chair of the Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Group at the Minneapolis law firm of Henson & Efron. As an active speaker and educator on all aspects of estate planning, he works closely with other financial service providers to share his knowledge and understanding of the complexities involved in creating sound strategies for protecting and preserving wealth. He is a frequent guest in the local media as well. His expertise and leadership extend to the public sector, where he is a member of the City Council for Woodbury. To discuss your estate planning goals with Burns, contact him at 612-252-2833 or cburns@hensonefron.com. ■

