



Researchers want to talk wills

11 June 2014

About 40 per cent of Australians do not have a will, but what happens when people die without one, and what does this mean for your family?

University of Queensland researchers want to speak to people aged 45 and older who have decided not to make a will, in a study aimed at addressing challenges associated with the task.

Researchers are also seeking residents who own farms or other assets that make drafting a will more difficult.

UQ's School of Social Work and Human Services Associate Professor Cheryl Tilse said the Australian Research Council funded study would address challenges such as dividing complex assets.

"Farms can present a challenging set of circumstances when drawing up a will," Professor Tilse said.

"Issues can arise about the timing of asset transfer and how to distribute assets, especially where some children are, or wish, to be involved in the farming operation and some children do not.

"Other possible complexities include whether or not the family residence is in the primary asset (the farm), the existence of debts, and changing attitudes towards inheritance patterns."

Professor Tilse said the topic of will-making was often avoided, especially when the circumstances were complex.

"The study aims to fill gaps in knowledge of how people manage will-making challenges, what they understand about the consequences of dying without a will, and what information is needed when making a will," she said.

Research findings will provide a basis for targeted public education campaigns and inform legal will drafters of the key issues of concern for groups with complex assets. The project is a collaboration between UQ, Queensland University of

Technology and Victoria University, supported by the Australian Research Council in partnership with seven public trustee organisations across Australia.

Study participants will be asked to complete a face-to-face or telephone interview at a mutually convenient time.

The study is funded by the Australian Research Council.

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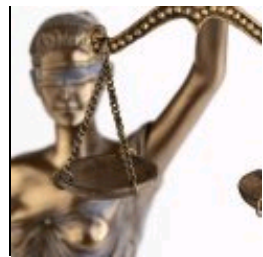
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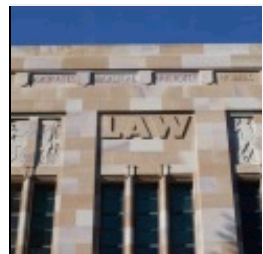
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