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**Deductibility of Long-Term Care
As Medical Expenses:
Income Tax Planning for Long-Term Care**

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I. INTRODUCTION

When planning for an individual with disabilities and their family, we can consider how to maximize the funds available to them by taking advantage of all available income tax deductions and credits. Many families are stretched beyond their means when caring for a loved one who is disabled. If we are able to direct them to tax deductions or credits, we benefit the families.

Most families are not aware that costs for long-term care services may be deductible as a medical expense by a chronically ill individual. A relative of the individual may be able to take the medical expense deduction as if it were their own if the disabled person qualifies as a dependent. Home health care by a non-professional may also be deductible, depending upon who is providing the service and the nature of the service.

Other ways to reduce income tax include taking a tax credit for dependent children or disabled adults, deductions for long-term care insurance premiums, and possibly reducing the income tax incurred from inherited IRAs.

II. MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION

A. AMOUNT OF THE DEDUCTION

To help offset some of the cost of medical care, a taxpayer can deduct expenses incurred for medical care to the extent that the expenses exceed 7.5% of their adjusted gross income (AGI) under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) § 213.¹ The medical expense deduction is only available as an itemized deduction and must not be otherwise compensated by insurance or other means.² The high cost of long-term care expenses often means that an itemized deduction may be more beneficial to a taxpayer than taking the standard deduction.

¹ I.R.C. § 213(a)

² *Id.*

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