

Super dad aims to be a hero for rest of week

MONDAY

Having just spent three days playing super dad as my wife has been on a girly weekend to Dublin, I arrive at my desk for 7.30am looking forward to a rest. I underestimated the job of being a full-time mum, although I would never admit this, of course.

It is two working days after A-Day. I am still waiting for the avalanche of enquiries for pension term assurance or life cover with tax relief or whatever we are supposed to be calling it - just as well because the Exchange does not seem to have got to grips with it yet.

Conversely, the expected last chance Isa stampede did materialise despite all the clients I reminded back in November. The rest of the day is spent ensuring all the new Isa plans have been implemented properly. Thankfully, Skandia is predictably reliable.

TUESDAY

An advert seen last night - from Tesco offering 1000 club card points if your life cover cannot be found cheaper anywhere else - prompts me to do an Aequos life cover comparison between our favoured protection providers and more prominent direct providers.

This highlighted the product features that are shrewdly discarded in favour of "stacking 'em high and selling 'em cheap".

Peter Chadborn is principal of CBK, an IFA based in Colchester, Essex, where he lives with his wife and two children. He enjoys fine wine and fine food and burns it off with brief exercise sporadically. The business also has offices in Nottingham and Swansea

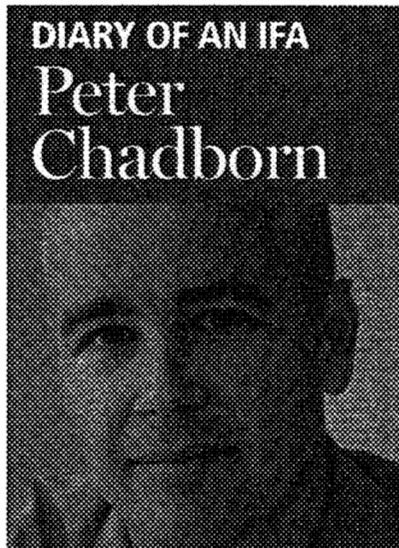
I wonder if people would still buy these policies if they were sold in bargain basement shops? The research is promptly circulated around the team.

An interesting referral from a local accountancy firm makes contact.

He is the owner of several fine bistros and hotels. Having been disappointed by a previous adviser's promise of on-going service after taking extortionate initial commissions, he is keen to learn if I am going to be any different.

He requires an overhaul of the pension arrangements for his employees and is interested in setting up a Sipp.

He is re-assured that we do not operate on an initial commission basis for



investment and retirement planning, and so a meeting is arranged.

WEDNESDAY

The long-awaited Association of British Insurers' Statement of Best Practice for Critical Illness will have to wait a few hours longer because I have the more pressing task of explaining to yet another client that what he thought was income protection

that had been sold to him by that nice man at the bank was in fact its poor relation - payment protection insurance.

Hopefully the package of cover created from the re-mortgage, bespoke income protection and comprehensive life and critical illness will form the basis of what will be a healthy working relationship.

I have barely finished my home-made soup when I take a call from another client who is concerned about Gordon Brown's meddling with trusts as announced in the Budget. Last year we set up a discounted gift trust for which she is naturally concerned.

As with all clients who are potentially affected, we are advising that no action should be undertaken until further clarity is obtained from the legislation.

She also requests advice on investing surplus cash, having just sold an investment property. Having established that remaining in cash is not an option, we discuss the basic choices including investing additional funds in her discretionary portfolio or in collectives through a platform.

A meeting is arranged in two weeks to give me time to formulate my recommendations.

Mounting paperwork means I finally leave the office at 9.30pm, more than ready to hit a good bottle of red.

THURSDAY

An early morning swim on the way to the office brushes off the cobwebs.

The first meeting of the day is to hear proposals from our IT supplier for a new system. I am glad to take a back seat and let my business partner, who has infinitely more IT knowledge than me, take the lead.

Lunch with fellow local IFAs - who are also good friends - gives us all the chance to catch up and share views on all that is good and bad in financial services.

We share the same frustrations of poor provider service levels and imbalance regulation but ultimately agree that it is a good time to be an IFA providing you know where to position yourself in the market.

The afternoon involves a new client meeting. Her mother is in a nursing home and they have realised that the value of her assets means that financial assistance will not be received from the local authority.

A fee structure is agreed and a few deprivation myths are dispelled before discussing how best to fund long-term care while preserving the estate.

FRIDAY

I spend quality time with family and friends, surely just what bank holidays are for? No gardening, no cleaning the car, certainly no shopping. That can all wait.