

Will I still be treated if I don't make an Advance Health Care Directive?

Absolutely. You will still get medical treatment. We just want you to know, if you become too sick to make decisions, someone else will have to make them for you.

What are the parts of the Advance Healthcare Directive form?

They are:

Part 1 – Power of Attorney for HealthCare

Lets you name another individual as your healthcare agent to make medical treatment decisions for you if you become unable to make those decisions.

Part 2 – Instructions for Healthcare

Lets you express your wishes about your future healthcare treatment.

Part 3 – Donation of Organs at Death (optional)

Part 4 – Primary Physician (optional)

Lets you designate a primary doctor, if you wish.

Part 5 – Signature

Sign and date the form. You will need two witnesses to your signature.

Where do I get the Advance Healthcare Directive form?

You should ask your physician or physical health care office for an Advance Healthcare Directive form. A printable form is available on-line at: <http://www.calhealth.org/public/pubs/frmspstrs.html>.

How can I get more information about making an Advance Healthcare Directive?

Ask your primary medical doctor, nurse, social worker, or healthcare provider to get more information for you. You can have a lawyer write an Advanced Healthcare Directive for you or you can complete one yourself by filling in the blanks on a form. Instructions are included on the form. Additional resource information is included on the back of this brochure.

Important Contacts and Resources

Patients' Rights Advocate
(530) 886-5419

For further assistance:
Legal Services of Northern California
190 Reamer St.
Auburn, CA 95603
(530) 823-7560

Additional information on-line:
Office of Attorney General
www.ag.ca.gov/consumers/general/adv_hc_dir.htm

California Medical Association
www.cmanet.org/publicdoc.cfm/7

You may file a complaint regarding noncompliance with the Advance Medical Directive requirements to:

California Department of Human
Services Licensing and Certification
P.O. Box 997413
Sacramento, CA 95899-1413
Or call
1-800-236-9747



Placer/Sierra County
Mental Health Plan (MHP)

**ADVANCE
HEALTHCARE
DIRECTIVE**



*You have the right
to make decisions
about your medical treatment*

What is an Advance Health Care Directive?

An Advance Health Care Directive is the best way to make sure that your physical health care wishes are known and considered if for any reason you are unable to make decisions on your own.

Do I have to wait until I am sick to express my wishes about health care?

No. In fact, it is better to decide before you get very sick or have to go into a hospital, nursing home, or other healthcare facility. You can use an Advance Health Care Directive to say who you want to speak for you and what kind of treatments you want. These documents are called "Advance" because you prepare one before healthcare decisions need to be made. They are called "Directives" because they tell who you want to speak for you and what kind of treatment should or should not be done.

Who can make an Advance Directive?

Anyone over 18 years of age (or an emancipated minor) who is capable of making his/her own medical decisions can make an Advance Health Care Directive. You do not need a lawyer.

Who decides about my treatment?

Your doctors will give you information and advice about treatment. You have the right to choose. You can say "Yes" to treatments you want. You can say "No" to any treatment that you don't want - even if the treatment might keep you alive longer.

How do I know what I want?

Your doctor must tell you about your medical condition and about what different treatment and pain management options are available. Your doctor must also inform you of any side effects from treatment or medications. At times, more than one treatment might help you. Your doctor can advise you about different options. You can discuss options with your family and friends. Ultimately, it is your decision.

Can I choose a relative or friend to make healthcare decisions for me?

Yes. You may appoint them to be your health care "Agent" by completing Part 1: Power of Attorney for Health Care on the Advance Health Care Directive.

What if I become too sick to make my own decisions?

If you have named an agent, he/she will make medical decisions on your behalf. If not, your doctor will ask your closest relative or friend to decide what is best for you. Most of the time that works, sometimes everyone cannot agree about what to do. That's why it is helpful if you can say in advance what you want to happen if you cannot speak for yourself.

Who may I appoint as my health care agent?

You may appoint any adult to be your agent. It is important that you talk to the person first to make sure that he/she understands your wishes and is willing to accept the responsibility.

How does my agent know what I would want?

After you choose your agent, talk to that person about what you want. Sometimes treatment decisions are hard to make and it truly helps if your agent knows what you want. Writing down your health care wishes will be helpful for your agent. You can also write specific health care wishes in your Part 2: Instructions for Health Care of the Advance Health Care Directive.

When does my agent begin making my medical decisions?

Usually a healthcare agent will make decisions only after you lose the ability to make them yourself. But if you wish, you can state in the Power of Attorney for Health Care, that you want the agent to begin making decisions immediately.

What if I don't want to name someone to make my healthcare decisions (an agent)?

You can write down your wishes for healthcare treatment without naming an agent. You can say that you want to have your life continued as long as possible, or you can say that you would not want treatment to continue your life. Also, you can express your wishes about the use of pain relief or any other type of medical treatment. Even if you do not complete the form, you can discuss your wishes with your doctor and ask your doctor to list those wishes in your medical record. You can also discuss your wishes with family members or friends. But it will probably be easier to follow your wishes if you write them down.

What happens when someone else makes decisions about my treatment?

The same rules apply to anyone who makes healthcare decisions on your behalf - a healthcare agent, a person whose name you gave to the doctor, or a person appointed by a court to make decisions for you. All are required to follow your Health Care Instructions or your general wishes about your treatment, including stopping treatment. If your treatment wishes are not known, the person who makes the decisions on your behalf must try to determine what is in your best interest. The people providing your health care must follow the decisions of the person you designated unless a requested treatment would be bad medical practice or ineffective in helping you. If this causes disagreement that cannot be worked out, the health care provider must make a reasonable effort to find another healthcare provider to take over your treatment.

What if I change my mind? You can change or cancel your Advance Healthcare Directive at any time as long as you can communicate your wishes. To change the person you want to make your healthcare decisions, you must sign a statement or tell the doctor in charge of your care.