

About Advance Care Planning

Every adult has the right to decide what medical care they think is best for them. Planning for your healthcare ahead of time allows others to honor your healthcare choices if you are unable to speak for yourself. Advance Care Planning (ACP) lets you choose someone to be your spokesperson (who can speak for you when you cannot) and tell healthcare providers what to do for your medical care.

What is Advance Care Planning?

Advance Care Planning is a process that helps you think about, understand, and talk about your healthcare choices with others important to you. This type of planning will help your family, loved ones and your caregivers when you cannot speak for yourself. Making a plan that meets your needs means that others will not have to guess what they should do for you.

What is a Facilitator?

Facilitators are trained to help you identify what is important to you, help you make decisions about your future healthcare, and help you put your plan in writing. Your wishes may change over time, so it is helpful to review your plan yearly or as needed, such as if you have a change in health, or your wishes change.

The Facilitator is skilled to help you clarify your personal values, beliefs and preferences for end-of-life care. The conversation moves at your own pace, and there is no pressure to sway your healthcare wishes.

What is a Patient Advocate?

Patient Advocates are chosen by you and are named in your Advance Directive. Choosing someone to be your patient advocate means you trust this person to speak for you and share your healthcare decisions if you are unable. This person must accept this role. Patient Advocates are named in a type of document called a Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare (DPOAH), or Designation of Patient Advocate form. These forms are a part of your Advance Directive.

What is an Advance Directive?

An Advance Directive is your written wishes that names your Patient Advocate and future wishes for healthcare, based on your planning. An Advance Directive lets you have control over your future healthcare treatments. This form will guide your Patient Advocate, loved ones and your caregivers when you cannot speak for yourself.

Naming your Patient Advocate and declaring your wishes for future healthcare completes your Advance Directive.