

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Making your own choices
about end-of-life care



ARBOR
HOSPICE

Our choices are what makes our lives our own.

We take for granted our ability to make our own decisions. No one ever wants to experience a time when they are unable to make their own decisions, especially if those decisions are about the kind of care you would want if you are injured, sick or at the end of life. When you choose to enroll in hospice care, an advance directive can be a valuable tool.

An advance directive is a legal document that helps to ensure your health care wishes will be respected. It allows you to express your treatment and care preferences in writing. And importantly, it requires that you identify a patient advocate of your choosing to make medical treatment and related personal care decisions for you if you are unable to speak for yourself.

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS I CAN HELP MY FAMILY?

Sharing information about your health history, medications, and treatments is a good start. Allowing them to go with you to doctor's appointments and talking over care options is the best way for them to learn your wishes.

WHO CAN BE A PATIENT ADVOCATE?

Anyone who is at least 18 years of age may be appointed as a patient advocate. You should choose someone you trust who can handle the responsibility and is willing to serve in this role. The person must sign a form saying they accept the role.

HOW DO I APPOINT A PATIENT ADVOCATE?

You may use a form written by your attorney, or another organization, or write the document yourself. A form used to designate a patient advocate is available from Arbor Hospice. Under Michigan law, the

designation of patient advocate must be in writing, it must be signed, dated and witnessed, and the designated patient advocate must agree in writing.

WHO CAN WITNESS MY SIGNATURE?

The designation must be signed in the presence of two witnesses who also sign the form. The witnesses cannot be a spouse, a child, a grandchild, a brother or sister, an employee of a company that provides you with life or health insurance, or an employee of the health care agency or institution that is caring for you.

WHY MIGHT I BE UNABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN MEDICAL TREATMENT DECISIONS?

You may become temporarily or permanently unable to make informed decisions because of unconsciousness, coma, brain injury, mental illness, degenerative illness such as Alzheimer's disease, or other medical conditions.





In addition to completing an advance directive, it is important to talk about your care choices with your loved ones.

WHO DETERMINES IF I AM UNABLE TO MAKE MY OWN DECISIONS?

Your attending physician along with other health care professionals will make the determination as to whether you are able to make your health care decisions.

WILL ARBOR HOSPICE HONOR MY WISHES AND THOSE EXPRESSED BY MY PATIENT ADVOCATE?

Arbor Hospice first honors your wishes expressed in your advance directives or as expressed by your patient advocate, then any other written documents, such as a living will.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY PATIENT ADVOCATE DOESN'T FOLLOW MY WISHES?

If your hospice care team feels the patient advocate is not acting in accordance with your expressed wishes, they will refer the case to the Arbor Hospice Ethics Committee. Patients and family members may also refer cases for an ethics consultation. The Committee only makes recommendations; treatment decisions are made by the patient, or the patient advocate, or the attending physician.

For information on Arbor Hospice's policy on medical treatment decisions, please call the Office of Organizational Integrity: 888-992-CARE.

ARE THERE OTHER ADVANCE DIRECTIVES?

Yes, a living will and a do-not-resuscitate order (DNR) are also considered advance directives. A living will is a statement that describes the kind of treatment you want if you become terminally ill. A living will is not legally binding in Michigan, but provides instruction to health care

decision makers. A do-not-resuscitate order (DNR), is a document that states you do not wish to be resuscitated if your breathing or your heartbeat stops.

Advance directives are sometimes known by other names, including Patient Advocate, Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, Health Care Agent, Medical Durable Power of Attorney and Health Care Proxy.

WHAT DO I DO WITH THE DOCUMENT?

Copies of the original document are legally valid, so make several and give them to your patient advocate, family members, and physician. In an emergency, first responders will look in the freezer, glove box of your car, or wallet to find information, so place copies in those locations along with a list of your medications and other medical records.

It is a good idea to keep a card in your wallet behind your driver's license that includes contact information for your patient advocate and the location of your documents.

Bring your document with you when you go for treatment, are having surgery or are being admitted to a hospital, engaging home health, or moving into a nursing home.

Many people have found it convenient to scan a copy of their document to make it a portable document file (PDF), which can be emailed, texted, and even saved on a smart-phone.

You should review your patient advocate document regularly in case there are changes in your health status, life circumstance or relationships. If you need to draft a new document, remember to collect the old documents and destroy them as you distribute the new copies.

INTERNET RESOURCES

HAVE YOU HAD THE TALK?
www.haveyouhadthetalk.com

**THE CONVERSATION
PROJECT**
<https://theconversationproject.org>

**CARING CONNECTIONS/
STATE SPECIFIC FORMS**
www.caringinfo.org

**PEACE OF MIND/
MEDICAL AND LEGAL DECISIONS**
www.legislature.mi.gov

**MAKING MEDICAL DECISIONS
FOR SOMEONE ELSE**
www.americanbar.org

UNDERSTANDING HOSPICE
www.hospicefoundation.org

UNDER OUR CARE, THERE'S COMFORT

Since 1984, Arbor Hospice has been committed to providing quality compassionate care for those experiencing life-limiting illnesses. Arbor Hospice, a not-for-profit organization, is integrated into the community with the help of its experienced staff and caring volunteers through its certified hospice services, grief support services and community education programs. Arbor Hospice serves communities in Hillsdale, Igham, Jackson, Lenawee, Livingston, Monroe and Washtenaw counties.

As a member of the NorthStar Care Community, we collaborate with other not-for-profit providers, sharing a goal to continually provide unsurpassed care, guidance and quality of life for patients facing serious illness, which includes practicing the highest standards of hospice and palliative care. Collectively, we touch the lives of more than 9,800 patients and families each year.



ARBOR HOSPICE

888-992-CARE
CALL US ANYTIME

24/7 Caregiver Support Center

arborhospice.org

Home Office

2366 Oak Valley Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Find us on Facebook at
facebook.com/arborhospice.org



*Arbor Hospice is a recognized
501c3 charitable organization.*