

# ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

# Purpose

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- Discuss advance directives and end-of-life care decisions
- Learn the different types of advance directives
  - Living Will
  - Durable Power of Attorney
  - POLST
- Recognize advantages and disadvantages of advance directives
- Identify resources that can help you complete your advance directives

# What is an Advance Directive?

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- An advance directive is a document that indicates in writing:
  - Your choices about the treatments you want or do not want
  - Who will make healthcare decisions for you if you become incapacitated and cannot express your wishes

# My Wishes

\*Dialysis

\*Medicines

\*Feeding Tube

\*Blood and Water Transfusion

\*Breathing Machines or Ventilator

\*Surgery

\*Organ or Tissue Donation

\*Funeral or Burial Wishes

\*Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

\*Autopsy

# Why Have an Advance Directive

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- An advance directive speaks for you when you are unable to do so. It tells others the care and treatments you do or do not want and/or who will make healthcare decisions for you when you cannot express your wishes. It may relieve your family from the burden of guessing what you would want. Providing such guidance may also prevent painful family arguments about how you would want to be treated.

# Two Kinds of Advance Directives

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- Living Will - Indicates what kind of treatments you would want, and what treatments you wouldn't want
- Durable Power of Attorney - Names a person of your choosing to make decisions for you

# What Is a Living Will?

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- A living will is a written statement in which you specify what kind of healthcare you do or do not want to receive. It can act as a guide for those who may need to make your medical decisions. A living will allows you to make decisions regarding treatment or machines that keep your heart, lungs or kidneys functioning when they are unable to function on their own.
- Although you may write your living will on your own, it is best to inform your family, close friends and physician of your wishes.

# What is a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care?

- The power of attorney for healthcare is a form that allows you to appoint another person (a "healthcare agent") to make healthcare decisions for you if you are not capable of making them for yourself. When you complete this form, you give authority to your healthcare agent to make a wide range of decisions for you, such as:
  - Whether or not you should have an operation,
  - Receive certain medications
  - Be placed on life support



# Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care

## - Cont.

- In some areas of healthcare, your healthcare agent is not allowed to make decisions for you unless you give him or her specific authority in these areas when you complete the form. These areas are listed on the form.
- You can also include specific instructions about the type of treatments you want or do not want (such as surgery or tube feedings) when you complete the form. A power of attorney for healthcare goes in effect only when two physicians, or a physician and a psychologist, agree in writing that you can no longer understand your treatment options or express your wishes to others.

# What is POLST? (Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment)

- This form is used to direct paramedics, physicians and other health care professionals on what life sustaining measures are required. *The POLST does not replace an Advance Directive. This form should be reviewed in conjunction with the Advance Directive, to ensure that there is no conflict.*
- It is a doctor's order that is recognized throughout the medical system.
- It is a portable document that transfers with the patient from one care setting to another.
- It is easily distinguished by its bright pink color.
- It is a standardized form for the whole state.
- Allows individuals to choose medical treatments they want to receive, and identify those they do not want.
- Provides direction for healthcare providers during serious illness.

# POLST vs Advance Healthcare Directive

POLST	AHCD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For Seriously ill/frail, at any age</li><li>• Specific orders for <u>current</u> treatment</li><li>• Can be signed by decision maker</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For anyone 18 and older</li><li>• General instructions for <u>future</u> treatment</li><li>• Appoints decision maker</li></ul>

# What should I do with the forms?

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- Please share this form with your family, friends, and medical providers.
- Please make sure copies of this form are placed in your medical record at all the places you get care.
- For California Nursing Home Residents ONLY
  - Give this form to your nursing home director. California law requires nursing home residents to have the nursing home ombudsman as a witness of advance directives.
- Print and carry a wallet card

# Member/Caregiver Responsibility

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- Members have a right to enact Advance Directives.
- Advance Directives should be provided to the primary care provider upon enacting an Advance Directive.
- When Advance Directives are revoked and/or the agent made changes, the information should be updated with the health care provider.
- The Member has a right to not be discriminated against because there is an Advance Directive in place.
- Members have the right to be treated with dignity.

# Provider Responsibility

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- Advance Directives are to be copied and maintained in the Medical Records.
- In the event that a physician or other appropriate health care professional refuses to comply with an Advance Directive on the basis of policies based on moral convictions, religious beliefs or other conscientious objections, at the request of the Member or authorized representative care of the Member, the Member must be transferred to another physician willing to care them.
- Members/caregivers are allowed to have input into their plan of care.

# Where can I obtain a form?

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- Advance Directive

<https://prepareforyourcare.org/prepare/7-intro-home>

- POLST

<https://polst.org/>