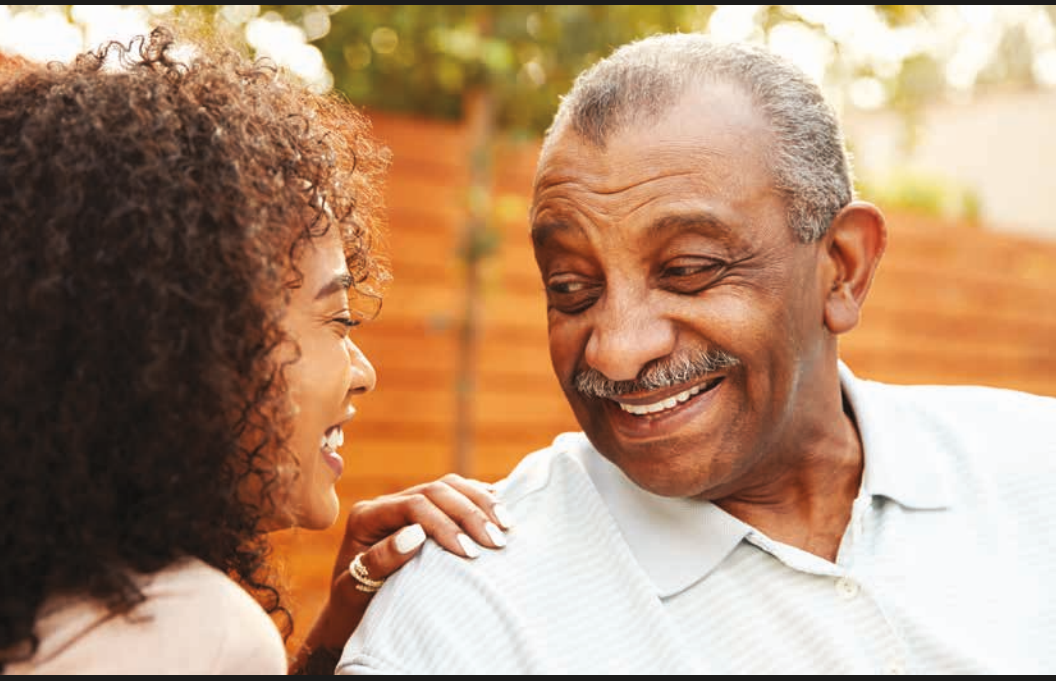


Advance Directives



Making Your Health Care Wishes Known

Table of Contents

What Are Advance Directives?	4
Two Types of Advance Directives.....	5
Health Care Power of Attorney	5
Living Will	6
Common Questions about Advance Directives	7
Filling Out Advance Directives.....	11
For More Information.....	14
Notes.....	15

During their lifetime, most people do a great deal of planning for future events. Because of rapid advances in technology, many people are also planning for the kind of health care they would choose should they ever be unable to make decisions for themselves. It can be very hard for your loved ones to make decisions for you if they are not sure of what you would want. Under Ohio law, you may prepare Advance Directives so your loved ones will know they are respecting your wishes, values, and beliefs. Some questions to consider include:

- How do you feel about your current health?
- What are your thoughts about end-of-life issues – your hopes and beliefs?
- How do your thoughts affect your decisions about health care?

This booklet will help you understand Advance Directives and what you need to think about before completing these forms. The forms include information and lists of terms with their meanings throughout the sections. It may be helpful to read both this booklet and the forms before you begin to complete them.



What Are Advance Directives?

- **Advance Directives** are forms that you complete to give instructions about your health care for times when you cannot speak for yourself. They reflect your personal values and beliefs concerning life, death, and health care choices.
- **The two types of Advance Directives** are:
 - Health Care Power of Attorney
 - Living Will
- A **Health Care Power of Attorney** allows you to choose who will make decisions about your health care.
- A **Living Will** allows you to give specific instructions about the kind of health care treatments you want or do not want.
- **Advance Directives ensure that your health care choices are respected.** They may give your family peace of mind because your choices are known.

Two Types of Advance Directives

Health Care Power of Attorney

The Health Care Power of Attorney identifies the person you choose to make health care decisions for you. This person, called an agent, will make most health care decisions for you if your doctor determines that you are not able to make decisions for yourself.

There is a box you can initial if you choose to give your agent access to your protected health information. Access to this information goes into effect right away and continues into the future until it is revoked.

This form also allows you the option to nominate a guardian over your person or estate should you be unable to make personal or financial decisions. You can nominate the same person you have for the Health Care Power of Attorney or you can choose a separate person to act as your guardian. The nomination needs to be approved by the probate courts of Ohio if the guardianship process is begun.



Living Will

A Living Will lets your doctor know that you want comfort measures provided to you only if you cannot speak for yourself and you are in:

- a terminal condition (no chance of recovery) and death will occur in a relatively short period of time, or
- a permanently unconscious state.

All methods of life support will be stopped. You will be allowed to die naturally and provided with comfort care to lessen any pain.

This form goes into effect only when you are permanently unconscious or terminally ill and can no longer speak for yourself.

The Living Will includes an optional Anatomical Gift form that deals with organ and tissue donation. You may choose whether or not you wish to donate your organs and tissues at the time of your death. Completing this form is not required. You have the option of listing which organ(s) and tissue(s) you wish to donate and for what purpose(s).

Common Questions about Advance Directives

Should I have both a Living Will and a Health Care Power of Attorney?

It depends on your needs and your wishes. A Living Will puts your wishes about life support in writing. It is used only if you should ever be permanently unconscious or terminally ill.

The Health Care Power of Attorney form gives another person (or persons) the authority to make health care decisions for you if your doctor determines you are not able to make your own decisions. These decisions may be whether to consent to surgery or a serious life-or-death decision.

By law, if you sign both, your doctor must follow the wishes in your Living Will. This is true even if the person you chose to make your decisions disagrees with your wishes.

Who can I choose to make my health care decisions?

- The person you choose must be at least 18 years old. He or she should be a person with whom you are able to discuss your health care wishes.
- The person should be able to take an active role in your care if you are not able to speak for yourself. It is important to talk with the person before naming him or her. This person needs to be willing to support your wishes.
- The person can be a family member or friend.

- The person cannot be your own doctor.
- The person cannot be the administrator of the nursing home or extended care facility where you are staying.
- The person has the authority to make your health care decisions even when there are other family members present.
- It is also a good idea to name one or two other people in case your first choice is not available.

Who makes decisions for me if I cannot speak for myself and I do not have Advance Directives?

If you do not have a person named in a Health Care Power of Attorney form to make health care decisions for you, the State of Ohio defaults to the following order:

- your court-appointed guardian
- if none, your spouse
- if none, the majority of adult children
- if none, your parents
- if none, the majority of adult siblings
- if none, other adult blood relatives
- if none, adult significant others

If the doctor or hospital is unsure about who the decision maker is or if your family is in disagreement about your health care, and you have not named a Health Care Power of Attorney, the courts may need to appoint a legal guardian to make the decisions for you.

If I sign a Living Will, does it mean I'll never be on "a machine" or that they'll just let me go if my heart stops?

No. If you decide to sign a Living Will, you are saying that you do not wish to be on artificial life support if you are permanently unconscious or terminally ill. If you were to have a heart attack or some other emergency, you would still receive life-saving treatment.

If you never want to be on artificial life support, not even on a short-term basis, you must speak to your doctor to make your wishes known. Simply signing a Living Will does not mean you will never be on "a machine."

What is the Catholic Church's position on Advance Directives?

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that all life is sacred and must be preserved. However, the Church supports a person's choice not to have a health care treatment that he or she feels to be too burdensome or difficult, even if this means that death will come about more quickly.

Many faiths support the use of Advance Directives. If you have questions, you may wish to talk with your clergy person.

What if I change my mind after I sign?

You are free to change your mind at any time, even after signing. Simply tear up the forms and throw them away if you decide the forms no longer reflect your wishes. Also, be sure to tell your doctor, family, and anyone else who may have been given a copy of your Advance Directive(s) that you have changed your mind.

How long do Advance Directives last?

There are no time limits to the forms. A Living Will or a Health Care Power of Attorney will be valid until it is destroyed or a new form is signed.

Are they honored in other states?

Yes, generally. By having a Living Will or a Health Care Power of Attorney, your wishes are made known even if another state's law is somewhat different.



Filling Out Advance Directives

The questions below will help you in filling out the forms if you decide to complete a Living Will or a Health Care Power of Attorney.

Do the forms cost anything?

Mount Carmel provides the forms for you free of charge.

Can I complete the forms by myself?

No. If you decide to complete these forms, you need either two witnesses or a notary public to watch you sign them. If you choose to have two witnesses, they must be at least 18 years old and cannot be:

- related to you by blood, marriage, or adoption
- your doctor
- the administrator of the nursing home where you are living

Also, if you decide to complete a Health Care Power of Attorney, your witness cannot be:

- the person(s) you're asking to be your decision maker

If you are a hospital patient, a chaplain can assist you through the process.

Do I need a lawyer?

No, you do not need to have a lawyer's help to complete these forms. If, however, you do have legal questions, please feel free to consult a lawyer.

How do I complete the parts that deal with feeding tubes and IVs?

There is a section on each form that deals with feeding tubes and IV fluids (artificially or technologically supplied nutrition or hydration). This describes a time when you may be permanently unconscious and two doctors agree that the feeding tube and/or IV fluids are no longer helpful to you.

To indicate your wishes about feeding tubes and IV fluids:

- Leave the box blank if you wish to stay on a feeding tube or IV fluids no matter what the situation.
- Write your initials in the box if you do not want to remain on a feeding tube or IV fluids. Be sure to do this in the presence of your witnesses or notary.

What do I do with the parts of the Advance Directive that deal with organ and tissue donation?

The Donor Registry Enrollment Form should be completed only if you have not registered as a donor when renewing your driver's license with the Ohio BMV (Bureau of Motor Vehicles). If you complete the donor registry form, you need to send it to the Ohio BMV (the address is included in the form). Your wishes may not be followed unless you make the BMV aware of them. This is a legal document. It is very important that you talk to your family about organ and tissue donation plans so they know what to expect at the time of your death.

The Anatomical Gift section in the Living Will is optional. If completed, it remains as a part of your Living Will.

What do I do after signing an Advance Directive?

- Talk to your doctor(s), your family, your Health Care Power of Attorney agent, and anyone close to you about your treatment wishes and let them know that you've signed these papers.
- The form should be copied and given to:
 - your doctor(s) and your lawyer if you have one
 - the person(s) you named to make your health care decisions
 - your family and anyone close to you
- Take a copy to the hospital each time you are admitted.
- Keep copies in your home and car so you and your family can get to the forms easily.
- Keep the original copy in a safe place.



For More Information

If you have any further questions, please call one of the phone numbers listed below and ask to speak with a chaplain:

Mount Carmel East

Spiritual Care Services 614-234-6027

Case Management/Social Work Services.....614-234-6085

Mount Carmel Grove City

Spiritual Care Services 614-663-5900

Case Management/Social Work Services.....614-663-2335

Mount Carmel St. Ann's

Spiritual Care Services380-898-4135

Case Management/Social Work Services.....380-898-4385

Mount Carmel New Albany

Spiritual Care Services 614-775-6800

Case Management 614-775-6800

Other Services

Mount Carmel Home Care 614-234-0100

Mount Carmel Hospice 614-234-0200

MediGold 614-546-3110

or 800-240-3851 (*current members*)

800-964-4525 (*future members*)



MOUNT CARMEL