CaringInfo

Advance Directives

Advance care planning is a process, not an event, and is planning for future care based on a person's values, beliefs, preferences, and specific medical issues. An advance directive (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/what-is-an-advance-directive/) is the record of that process.

Advance directive is both an umbrella term for defining and expressing how one wants to live and be treated and for state approved advance directive documents (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/by-state/) which allow you to specify those things and usually to appoint a person (an Agent who is appointed through a power of attorney (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/power-of-attorney-and-caregiving/)) to speak when you are unable to speak for yourself.

In this section, you will learn about:

- What is an Advance Directive? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/what-is-an-advance-directive/)
- Download and Complete Your State or Territories' Advance Directive Form (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/by-state/)
- Creating Your Advance Directive (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/creating-advance-directive/)
- Storing and Retrieving Your Advance Directive (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/storing-advance-directive/)
- About Digital and Video Advance Directives (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/digital-video-advance-directives/)
- POLSTs are Portable Medical Orders (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/polsts-are-portable-medical-orders/)
- Power of Attorney and Caregiving (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/power-of-attorney-and-caregiving/)
- Choosing a Healthcare Agent (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/choosing-a-healthcare-agent/)

How Do You Find an Advance Directive for your State?

CaringInfo provides free advance directives and instructions for each state that can be opened as a PDF (Portable Document Format) file, which may be filled in online. The states vary in their requirements for witnesses, notarization and other specifics so review the form and its instructions carefully.

Learn about:

How do you download your state's advance directive? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/by-state/)

Preparing and storing your advance directive

The first steps in preparing an advance directive are to think about what is important to you, to talk with people you are close to, and to inform yourself about your health. Armed with this knowledge, you can make choices about your future treatment and let other people know what they are, both in person and in writing. From there you can find the best way to store and retrieve your advance directive as necessary.

Learn about:

What goes into an advance directive? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/what-is-an-advance-directive/)

How do you know what kinds of treatments you want? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/creating-advance-directive/#what-kind-of-treatments)

How do you store and retrieve your advance directive? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/storing-advance-directive/)

Are there digital or video forms of Advance directives? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/digital-video-advance-directives/)

What is a POLST? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/polsts-are-portable-medical-orders/)

What Is Power of Attorney?

A Power of Attorney is a legal document that identifies and empowers an Agent to speak for someone who wants assistance with financial or healthcare matters or can no longer speak for themselves. A Power of Attorney is an important tool for caregiving and CaringInfo is here to help you be empowered to complete the right document for your situation.

Learn about:

What is a Power of Attorney? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/power-of-attorney-and-caregiving/)

When is it useful to have a Power of Attorney? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/power-of-attorney-and-caregiving/#useful)

What are the types of Powers of Attorney? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/power-of-attorney-and-caregiving/#types)

How do you choose a healthcare agent? (https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/choosing-a-healthcare-agent/)

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