

End of Life Issues



St. Louis Parish
October 27, 2010

Advance Care Directives

- Advance directives are legally recognized documents that indicate an individual's preferences for a person to speak for him when he is unable to competently do so and/or to indicate medical treatment (s)he desires.

Advance Care Directives

- Power of Attorney
- Guardianship
- Living Will
- Do Not Resuscitate
- MOLST/POLST
- Health Care Proxy

Health Care Proxy

- ❑ Allows a patient to appoint an agent to make health care decisions in the event the patient is incapable of executing such decision
- ❑ In effect only during the time of incapacity.
- ❑ Allows for dynamic interaction between medical providers and the agent to determine care.

Health Care Proxy

- ❑ Upon 18th birthday
- ❑ While healthy
- ❑ After careful consideration of your choices
- ❑ After careful consideration of the qualities desired in the agent
- ❑ Knows your wishes on hydration and nutrition
- ❑ When two witnesses are available



Who determines if you are capable?



- ❑ The doctor determines whether or not you are capable of making decisions.

Who can be my health care agent?

- ❑ Any adult age 18 or older.
- ❑ A family member or friend.
- ❑ Your spouse.
- ❑ If divorced or legally separated, former spouse cannot serve as agent *unless* you note such date and sign on existing form or indicate such on new form.
- ❑ Knows your wishes on hydration, nutrition and ventilation.

Is the Health Care Proxy Permanent?

- ❑ It is in effect until you change the agent; change the instructions; fill out a new form.
- ❑ An alternate may be appointed if the agent is unavailable when needed.

What characteristics are desirable?

Patient

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graph TD; Patient --> Son; Patient --> Daughter1[Daughter, Exquisitely sensitive, close to you in heart and address.]; Patient --> Daughter2[Daughter, Executive in business, respects you, has different perspective on life.]
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Son

Understands your wishes, shares values, is a career Naval officer.

Daughter,
Exquisitely sensitive,
close to you in heart
and address.

Daughter,
Executive in business, respects you, has different perspective on life.

Characteristics

- Adult
- Will respect your wishes
- Can deal with authority
- Not likely to fall apart under pressure
- Understands your values
- Is willing
- Is reachable

Can I put indicate specific desires?

- Yes
- Organ donation must be indicated
- Hydration and nutrition