



Q&A

ADVANCE CARE PLANNING



What is Advance Care Planning?

Advance Care Planning involves developing and expressing your wishes regarding medical treatment and personal care in the case of illness or for the end of life.

What is a Living Will?

Advance directives related to medical treatment or other personal care preferences may be included in a POAPC. These instructions are sometimes referred to as a "Living Will."

What is an Advance Care Plan?

An Advance Care Plan is a written document that contains instructions and preferences for personal care, including who can make decisions on your behalf if you become incapable (also known as a substitute decision-maker ("SDM")); specific instructions related to medical treatment; and expressions of your values, beliefs, and goals with respect to your personal care.

Advance Care Planning for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities would involve the person's SDM, health care provider (such as family physician), and family members or friends that the person trusts, knows well, and who are willing to be involved in the process.

What advance directives should be considered in a POAPC or other documentation?

Advance directives with respect to personal care may include:

- Continuation or discontinuation of medical treatment;
- Life support;
- Religious or spiritual beliefs that may affect decisions about personal care/medical treatment;
- Living arrangements;
- Food preferences/allergies;
- Support worker preferences;
- Allergies to medication; and
- Organ donation.

How Do I Create an Advance Care Plan?

A person can prepare or update a Power of Attorney for Personal Care ("POAPC") if they are capable of doing so. A POAPC is a legal document that authorizes an SDM to make decisions related to health care, hygiene, nutrition, safety, shelter, and clothing. The authority granted to the attorney only comes into effect if a person is deemed incapable of deciding in one or more areas of personal care.

How Does COVID-19 Affect an Advance Care Plan?

A previously made Advance Care Plan may not address the COVID-19 context. A COVID-19 Advance Care Plan may include preferences for treatment related to COVID-19, including instructions on:

- Admission to hospital or health care facility;
- Active care in a hospital, health care facility or residence;
- Support mechanisms;
- Intensive care; and
- Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) preferences.

Who can make a Power of Attorney for Personal Care?

A person has the capacity to make a POAPC if (a) they can understand whether the person that they are naming as their SDM has a genuine concern for their welfare and (b) they appreciate that the SDM may make personal care decisions on their behalf.

What if I am not capable of making a POAPC?

If a person does not have the capacity to make a POAPC, they should ensure that their instructions and preferences for personal care are documented, including the identification of an SDM and the contact information of support persons.

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