



Advance Care Planning

Advance Care Planning is the process of thinking and talking about future medical decisions if you had a sudden event, like a car accident or illness, and could not make your own decisions. The best time to make these decisions is when you can choose for yourself.

Health Care Agent

A Health Care Agent is the person you choose to make medical decisions on your behalf if you are unable to make your own decisions. Discussing and sharing your wishes with your Health Care Agent is important.

Advance Directive for Health Care

An Advance Directive is a written plan that names your Health Care Agent and allows you to provide instructions for health care treatments based upon your values and what is important to you.

For more information about Advance Care Planning or for help creating an Advance Directive for Health Care, contact your health care team or Honoring Choices® Idaho.

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Advance Care Planning involves important real life conversations to reflect on, discuss, and plan for a time when you cannot make your own health care decisions. It is a process for you to understand possible health care choices, think about these choices in light of the values and goals important to you, discuss your choices with your loved ones and health care providers, and make a plan for future situations.

Imagine this scenario:

A life threatening event has left you unable to communicate with those around you or to participate in your daily care, treatment planning, or decision making. Even though all care and available treatments are being provided, your doctors have determined your illness or injury cannot be cured and death is likely, or your brain function will not return.

Ask yourself:

- What does 'living well' mean to me?
For example: If I were having a good day, what would happen on that day? Who would I talk to? What would I do?
- What brings me joy and comfort?
- What cultural, religious, spiritual, or personal beliefs, if any, might help me choose the care I want or don't want?

Plan:

- Give the gift of planning ahead. Have the conversation.
- Choose your Health Care Agent.
- Discuss your wishes with your Health Care Agent, others close to you, and your health care team.
- Document your wishes in an Advance Directive for Health Care.
- Update your plan regularly as a part of good health care.

Who should I choose as my Health Care Agent?

Your Health Care Agent is the person you choose and authorize to make health care decisions on your behalf if you cannot communicate for yourself. To choose the best person to be your Health Care Agent, ask:

- Who is able and willing to serve this role?
- Who will honor my wishes even if they do not agree with them?
- Who can make important health care decisions on my behalf during difficult or stressful situations?
- Who will stand up for me even if others disagree?
- Who is likely to be available in case of an emergency?

See common questions and answers on the other side.

COMMON QUESTIONS

When is my Advance Directive used?

You control your own medical care. If you become unable to choose or communicate your wishes, your health care team will follow the instructions as described in your Advance Directive and as your Health Care Agent directs. Be sure to give copies of your Advance Directive to your Health Care Agent and to your health care team.

What do I need to do to make my Advance Directive legal?

- You must be at least 18 years old, and able to understand and communicate your wishes.
- Your Advance Directive must be in writing, state your full name, be signed by you and dated.
- Your Advance Directive must include one or both of the following: your chosen Health Care Agent (Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care), and/or your health care or treatment instructions (Living Will for Health Care).
- In Idaho, your signature does *not* need to be witnessed or notarized. These requirements vary from state to state. If you complete an Advance Directive in another state, check the state requirements.

Where can I find the Honoring Choices® Idaho Advance Directive form?

You can get an Honoring Choices® Idaho Advance Directive form by contacting Honoring Choices® Idaho at (208) 947-4285 or info@honoringchoicesidaho.org.

Many people easily complete an Advance Directive on their own. If you want help completing the form, talk to your health care team or contact Honoring Choices® Idaho. Advance Care Planning facilitators are available to help you.

Can I change my mind?

If you change your mind you can update your Advance Directive at any time. It is recommended that you review your Advance Directive every year and whenever your health changes. If you make changes, please give copies of your revised Advance Directive to any person or organization that may have an outdated copy.

Where should I keep my completed Advance Directive?

Keep your signed and completed original Advance Directive in an easily accessible place where you keep other important documents. Give copies to:

- Your Health Care Agent(s)
- Family members or other loved ones who are likely to be involved in your health care
- Your primary care provider or health care team
- Your local hospital
- Idaho Secretary of State Health Care Directive Registry (<https://sos.idaho.gov/hcdr/index.html>)

Will my Advance Directive be valid in other states?

- Every state has its own requirements for an Advance Directive.
- Many states honor an Advance Directive created in another state.
- If you spend a lot of time in another state, check on that state's Advance Directive requirements.
- Keep a copy of your Advance Directive with you when you travel.

Learn More with Advance Care Planning Resources from Honoring Choices® Idaho

- www.HonoringChoicesIdaho.org
- Speakers are available for presentations on Advance Care Planning
- Advance Care Planning facilitators are available to provide free one-on-one sessions