



Health Care Directives

What Is A Health Care Directive?

A Health Care Directive is a legal document that allows you to appoint someone to make medical decisions on your behalf (Health Care Agent) and/or express your treatment preferences if you are unable to speak for yourself. A Health Care Directive is a combination of a Living Will and a Medical Power of Attorney.

Who Should Have A Health Care Directive?

Every adult (18 and over) should have a Health Care Directive. You never know when you might need one. The most publicized court battles regarding health care decisions have involved patients well under the age of 50.

Why Is It Important?

A Health Care Directive allows you to have a say in your medical treatment and end-of-life care. It provides your family with guidance and peace of mind. A Health Care Directive can reduce stress and chaos during an emotional time. It can eliminate the need for a court proceeding over your care.

With A Health Care Directive

- You can decide what treatment you receive, where you receive it at, and what is considered in your course of treatment.
- You can choose who will speak for you.
- Your family will have peace of mind knowing things went the way you would have wanted them to.

Without A Health Care Directive

- You will receive treatment—but it may not be the treatment you would choose for yourself.
- Someone will make decisions about your treatment—but it may be someone you would never choose.
- Your family may torment themselves over whether or not they made the right decisions or find themselves involved in a court battle.

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8 Steps to Advance Care Planning

Every adult needs to consider their wishes for medical treatment and end-of-life care. Advance Care Planning and a Health Care Directive can be completed in just 8 simple steps.

1. **Learn About Your Treatment Options** – It is impossible to leave instructions if you do not understand your options.
2. **Consider Your Values and Wishes** – An integral part of Advance Care Planning is knowing and understanding what is most important to you.
3. **Choose Your Health Care Agent** – Choosing the right agent (the person who makes treatment decisions) will provide protection and comfort for you and your loved ones.
4. **Provide Your Instructions** – Health Care Instructions can guide your agents, family, and doctors in making the right choices for you.
5. **Make It Legal!** - A valid Health Care Directive makes sure everyone is on the same page.
6. **Talk About It** – Share your thoughts and wishes about end-of-life care with those closest to you.
7. **Make It Accessible** – A Health Care Directive is no good if it is not there in an emergency. Make sure you keep a copy accessible, and ensure that your agent has a copy of their own.
8. **Review and Update It Regularly** – An out-of-date Health Care Directive can be worse than no Health Care Directive at all.

To learn more about Advance Care Planning and Minnesota Health Care Directives visit www.LewisKLaw.com/mnhcd to request a copy of the book *Why Every Adult Must Have A Health Care Directive* and to complete your own Minnesota Health Care Directive.

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