

NEW MEXICO Advance Directive Planning for Important Health-Care Decisions

Caring Connections

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CARING CONNECTIONS

Caring Connections, a program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), is a national consumer engagement initiative to improve care at the end of life.

It's About How You LIVE

It's About How You LIVE is a national community engagement campaign encouraging individuals to make informed decisions about end-of-life care and services. The campaign encourages people to:

- L**earn about options for end-of-life services and care
- I**mplement plans to ensure wishes are honored
- V**oice decisions to family, friends and health-care providers
- E**ngage in personal or community efforts to improve end-of-life care

Note: The following is not a substitute for legal advice. While Caring Connections updates the following information and form to keep them up-to-date, changes in the underlying law can affect how the form will operate in the event you lose the ability to make decisions for yourself. If you have any questions about how the form will help ensure your wishes are carried out, or if your wishes do not seem to fit with the form, you may wish to talk to your health-care provider or an attorney with experience in drafting advance directives.

Using these Materials

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Check to be sure that you have the materials for each state in which you may receive health care.

These materials include:

- Instructions for preparing your advance directive, please read all the instructions.
- Your state-specific advance directive forms, which are the pages with the gray instruction bar on the left side.

ACTION STEPS

1. You may want to photocopy or print a second set of these forms before you start so you will have a clean copy if you need to start over.
2. When you begin to fill out the forms, refer to the gray instruction bars — they will guide you through the process.
3. Talk with your family, friends, and physicians about your advance directive. Be sure the person you appoint to make decisions on your behalf understands your wishes.
4. Once the form is completed and signed, photocopy the form and give it to the person you have appointed to make decisions on your behalf, your family, friends, health-care providers and/or faith leaders so that the form is available in the event of an emergency.
5. You may also want to save a copy of your form in Google Health, or another online medical records management service that allows you to share your medical documents with your physicians, family, and others who you want to take an active role in your advance care planning. You can read more about Google Health at <http://www.caringinfo.org/googlehealth>.

Introduction to Your New Mexico Advance Health-Care Directive

This packet contains a legal document, the New Mexico Advance Health-Care Directive that protects your right to refuse medical treatment you do not want, or to request treatment you do want, in the event you lose the ability to make decisions yourself. You may complete Part I, Part II, Part III, or any or all parts, depending on your advance-planning needs. You must complete Part IV.

Part I, Power of Attorney for Health Care, lets you name someone to make decisions about your health care—including decisions about life support—if you can no longer speak for yourself. The power of attorney for health care is especially useful because it appoints someone to speak for you any time you are unable to make your own health-care decisions, not only at the end of life.

Part I goes into effect when your doctor determines that you are no longer able to make or communicate your health-care decisions.

Part II, Instructions for Health Care, functions as your state's living will. It lets you state your wishes about health care in the event that you can no longer speak for yourself and:

- a) you have an incurable or irreversible condition that will result in death within a relatively short time, or
- b) you become unconscious and, to a reasonable degree of medical certainty, will not regain consciousness, or
- c) the likely risks and burdens of treatment would outweigh the expected benefits.

Part II also allows you to record your organ donation, pain relief, and other advance planning wishes.

Part III allows you to designate a primary physician

Part IV contains the signature and witnessing provisions so that your document will be effective.

This form does not expressly address mental illness. If you would like to make advance care plans regarding mental illness, you should talk to your physician and an attorney about a durable power of attorney tailored to your needs.

Note: This document will be legally binding only if the person completing them is a competent adult, 18 or older, or an emancipated minor between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who has been married, who is on active duty in the armed forces or who has been declared by court order to be emancipated.

Completing Your New Mexico Advance Health-Care Directive

How do I make my advance health-care directive legal?

You must sign and date this form after completing it. You are not required to have your document witnessed, but it may be helpful to do so in case your advance health-care directive is ever challenged.

Whom should I appoint as my agent?

Your agent is the person you appoint to make decisions about your health care if you become unable to make those decisions yourself. Your agent may be a family member or a close friend whom you trust to make serious decisions. The person you name as your agent should clearly understand your wishes and be willing to accept the responsibility of making health-care decisions for you.

You can appoint a second person as your alternate agent. The alternate will step in if the first person you name as an agent is unable, unwilling, or unavailable to act for you.

The person you appoint as your agent cannot be an owner, operator, or employee of a health-care institution at which you receive care unless he or she is related to you by blood, marriage, or adoption.

Should I add personal instructions to my advance health-care directive?

One of the strongest reasons for naming an agent is to have someone who can respond flexibly as your health-care situation changes and deal with situations that you did not foresee. If you add instructions to this document it may help your agent carry out your wishes, but be careful that you do not unintentionally restrict your agent's power to act in your best interest. In any event, be sure to talk with your agent about your future medical care and describe what you consider to be an acceptable "quality of life."

What if I change my mind?

Except for the appointment of your agent, you may revoke any portion or all of this advance directive at any time and in any way that communicates your intent to revoke. This could be by telling your agent or physician that you revoke, by signing a revocation, or simply by tearing up your advance directive.

In order to revoke your agent's appointment, you must either tell your supervising health-care provider of your intent to revoke or revoke your agent's appointment in a signed writing. If you must have someone sign for you, your written revocation must be witnessed by two adults who sign in the presence of each other and the person signing for you.

If you execute a new advance directive, it will revoke the old advance directive to the extent of any conflict between the two documents.

Unless you specify otherwise in the “other wishes” section of Part II, if you designate your spouse as your agent, that designation will automatically be revoked by divorce or annulment of your marriage

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EXPLANATION

This form is optional. It lets you name someone else to make health-care decisions for you if you become unable to make your own decisions and/or give instructions about your own health care. You may fill out some or all of this form. You may change all or any part of it, or use a different form.

EXPLANATION

If you have already signed a durable power of attorney for health care and/or a right to die statement (living will), they are still valid.

If you do fill out this form, be sure to sign and date it. You have the right to revoke (cancel) or replace this form at any time. Give copies of this signed form to your health-care providers and institutions, health-care agents you name, and your family and friends. A copy of this form has the same effect as the original.

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PART I: POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTH CARE

(1) DESIGNATION OF AGENT:

I, _____, (your name)
appoint the following person as my agent to make health-care decisions
for me:

(name of agent)

(address)

(city)

(state)

(zip code)

(home phone)

(work phone)

If I revoke my agent's authority, or if my agent is not willing, able, or
reasonably available to make a health-care decision for me, then I
appoint the following person as my first alternative agents:

(name of first alternative agent)

(address)

(city)

(state)

(zip code)

(home phone)

(work phone)

If I revoke the authority of my agent and the first alternative agent, or if
neither is willing, able, or reasonably available to make a health-care
decision for me, then I appoint the following person as my second
alternative agent:

(name of second alternative agent)

(address)

(city)

(state)

(zip code)

(home phone)

(work phone)

PRINT THE NAME,
ADDRESS, AND
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS OF YOUR
PRIMARY
AGENT

PRINT THE NAME,
ADDRESS, AND
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS OF YOUR
FIRST
ALTERNATIVE
AGENT

PRINT THE NAME,
ADDRESS, AND
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS OF
YOUR SECOND
ALTERNATIVE
AGENT

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ADD PERSONAL
INSTRUCTIONS
ONLY IF YOU
WANT TO LIMIT
THE POWER OF
YOUR AGENT

INITIAL THE BOX
ONLY IF YOU WISH
YOUR AGENT'S
AUTHORITY TO
BECOME EFFECTIVE
IMMEDIATELY

CROSS OUT AND
INITIAL ANY
STATEMENTS IN
PARAGRAPHS
3, 4, OR 5
THAT DO NOT
REFLECT YOUR
WISHES

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(2) AGENT'S AUTHORITY: My agent is authorized to obtain and review medical records, reports and information about me, and to make all health-care decisions for me, including decisions to provide, withhold or withdraw artificial nutrition, hydration and all other forms of health care to keep me alive, except as I state here:

(3) WHEN AGENT'S AUTHORITY BECOMES EFFECTIVE: My agent's authority becomes effective when my primary physician and one other qualified health-care professional determine that I am unable to make my own health-care decisions. If I initial this box [], my agent's authority to make health-care decisions for me takes place immediately and shall remain in effect despite my later incapacity.

(4) AGENT'S RESPONSIBILITY: My agent shall make health-care decisions for me based on this power of attorney for health care, and specific health-care instructions I give and my other wishes to the extent known to my agent. If my wishes are unknown and cannot be determined, my agent shall make health-care decisions for me based on my best interest. In determining my best interest, my agent shall consider my personal values to the extent known.

(5) NOMINATION OF GUARDIAN: I intend by this power of attorney for health care to avoid a court-supervised guardianship. If I need a guardian, I want my agent appointed in this form to be my guardian. If that agent cannot or will not act as my guardian, I want my alternative agents, in the order they are appointed in this form, to be my guardian.

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PART II: INSTRUCTIONS FOR HEALTH CARE

If you are satisfied to allow your agent to determine what is best for you in making end-of-life decisions, you need not fill out this part of the form. If you do fill out this part of the form, you may cross out any wording you do not want.

(6) END-OF-LIFE DECISIONS: If I am unable to make or communicate decisions regarding my health care, and IF (i) I have an incurable or irreversible condition that will result in my death within a relatively short time, OR (ii) I become unconscious and, to a reasonable degree of medical certainty, I will not regain consciousness, OR (iii) the likely risks and burdens of treatment would outweigh the expected benefits, THEN I direct that my health-care providers and others involved in my care provide, withhold or withdraw treatment in accordance with the choice I have initialed below:

- _____ I Choose NOT To Prolong Life: I do not want my life to be prolonged.
- _____ I Choose To Prolong Life: I want my life to be prolonged as long as possible within the limits of generally accepted health care standards.
- _____ I Choose To Let My Agent Decide: My agent under my power of attorney for health care may make life-sustaining treatment decisions for me.

(7) ARTIFICIAL NUTRITION AND HYDRATION: If I have chosen above NOT to prolong live, I also specify by marking my initials below that:

- _____ I DO NOT want artificial nutrition.
OR
_____ I DO want artificial nutrition.

- _____ I DO NOT want artificial hydration.
OR
_____ I DO want artificial hydration.

INITIAL THE
PARAGRAPH THAT
BEST REFLECTS
YOUR WISHES
REGARDING
LIFE -SUPPORT
MEASURES
INITIAL ONLY ONE
CHOICE

INITIAL YOUR
PREFERENCES
REGARDING
ARTIFICIAL
NUTRITION AND
HYDRATION

INITIAL ONLY ONE
CHOICE FOR
NUTRITION AND
ONE CHOICE FOR
HYDRATION

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INITIAL ONLY ONE
CHOICE

_____ I CHOOSE to make an anatomical gift of all or my organs or tissue to be determined by medical suitability at the time of death, and artificial support may be maintained long enough for organs to be removed.

_____ I CHOOSE to let my agent decide.

(9) RELIEF FROM PAIN OR DISCOMFORT: Regardless of the choices I have made in this form and except as I state in the following space, I direct that the best medical care possible to keep me clean, comfortable and free of pain or discomfort be provided at all times so that my dignity is maintained, even if this care hastens my death:

[illegible]

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(10) OTHER WISHES: (If you wish to write your own instructions, or if you wish to add to the instructions you have given above, you may do so here.) I direct that:

ADD OTHER
INSTRUCTIONS, IF
ANY, REGARDING
YOUR ADVANCE
CARE PLANS

THESE
INSTRUCTIONS CAN
FURTHER ADDRESS
YOUR HEALTH-CARE
PLANS, SUCH AS
YOUR WISHES
REGARDING
HOSPICE
TREATMENT, BUT
CAN ALSO ADDRESS
OTHER ADVANCE
PLANNING ISSUES,
SUCH AS YOUR
BURIAL WISHES

ATTACH
ADDITIONAL PAGES
IF NEEDED

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(add additional pages if needed)

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PART III: PRIMARY PHYSICIAN

(11) I designate the following physician as my primary physician:

(name of physician)

(address)

(city)

(state)

(zip code)

(phone)

If the physician I have designated above is not willing, able or reasonably available to act as my primary physician, I designate the following physician as my primary physician:

(name of physician)

(address)

(city)

(state)

(zip code)

(phone)

(12) EFFECT OF COPY: A copy of this form has the same effect as the original.

(13) REVOCATION: I understand that I may revoke this OPTIONAL ADVANCE HEALTH-CARE DIRECTIVE at anytime, and that if I revoke it, I should promptly notify my supervising health-care provider and any health-care institution where I am receiving care and any others to whom I have given copies of this power of attorney. I understand that I may revoke the designation of an agent either by a signed writing or by personally informing the supervising health-care provider.

PRINT THE NAME,
ADDRESS, AND
TELEPHONE
NUMBER OF
YOUR PRIMARY
PHYSICIAN

PRINT THE NAME,
ADDRESS, AND
TELEPHONE
NUMBER OF
YOUR ALTERNATE
PRIMARY
PHYSICIAN

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PART IV: EXECUTION

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Witnesses are recommended to avoid any concern that this document might be forged, that you were forced to sign it, or that it does not genuinely represent your wishes.

Witness No. 1

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness No. 2

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____ Date _____

PRINT YOUR NAME
AND ADDRESS AND
THEN SIGN AND
DATE THE
DOCUMENT

WITNESSES ARE
OPTIONAL, BUT
RECOMMENDED

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Courtesy of Caring Connections
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You Have Filled Out Your Health-Care Directive, Now What?

1. Your New Mexico Advance Health-Care Directive is an important legal document. Keep the original signed document in a secure but accessible place. Do not put the original document in a safe deposit box or any other security box that would keep others from having access to it.
2. Give photocopies of the signed original to your agent and alternate agent, doctor(s), family, close friends, clergy, and anyone else who might become involved in your healthcare. If you enter a nursing home or hospital, have photocopies of your document placed in your medical records.
3. Be sure to talk to your agent(s), doctor(s), clergy, family, and friends about your wishes concerning medical treatment. Discuss your wishes with them often, particularly if your medical condition changes.
4. You may also want to save a copy of your form in Google Health, or another online medical records management service that allows you to share your medical documents with your physicians, family, and others who you want to take an active role in your advance care planning. You can read more about Google Health at <http://www.caringinfo.org/googlehealth>.
5. If you want to make changes to your documents after they have been signed and witnessed, you must complete a new document.
6. Remember, you can always revoke your New Mexico document.
7. Be aware that your New Mexico document will not be effective in the event of a medical emergency. Ambulance and hospital emergency department personnel are required to provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) unless they are given a separate directive that states otherwise. These directives called "prehospital medical care directives" or "do not resuscitate orders" are designed for people whose poor health gives them little chance of benefiting from CPR. These directives instruct ambulance and hospital emergency personnel not to attempt CPR if your heart or breathing should stop.

Currently not all states have laws authorizing these orders. We suggest you speak to your physician if you are interested in obtaining one. **Caring Connections does not distribute these forms.**