Plan Ahead
For the Future

Our team here at Firelands Regional Health System is committed to creating a positive experience and providing exceptional quality and services for our patients and their families. We believe that it is important to inform you about your rights on how to make personal health care decisions and in making the right choices for you and your family. When you plan ahead by completing Advance Directives, you will bring comfort to yourself and your family regarding those unknown health care decisions. Our team of patient advocates and social work staff are happy to assist you, your family members and the community at large with information on how to complete Advance Directives, at no charge to you.

FIRELANDS
Regional Health System

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Understanding
Advance Directives

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What are Advance Directives?

"Advance Directives" are legal documents that provide instructions to an individual you have appointed to oversee your medical treatment and end-of-life wishes if you are unable to communicate. These include (a.) **Living Will** and (b.) **Medical (Healthcare) Power of Attorney (POA)**. Advance Directives allow you to plan ahead by sharing health care instructions with the medical team assisting you and your loved ones if or when you become unable, even temporarily, to make your own medical decisions.

Living Will

The Advance Directive that guides your family and healthcare team through the medical treatment you wish to receive if you are unable to communicate your wishes. This document will be considered legal once signed and witnessed by another individual. Your **Living Will** immediately takes effect once you are no longer able to make your own decisions.

Medical (Healthcare) Power of Attorney (POA)

The Advance Directive that allows you to appoint an individual that you trust to make decisions regarding your medical care if you are temporarily or permanently unable to communicate or make decisions. A **Medical (Healthcare) Power of Attorney (POA)** will take effect once your physician declares that you are unable to make your own medical decisions.

Other documents that can be prepared ahead of time that will indicate your health care preferences during a time of need:

The **Organ/Tissue Donor Registration Form** is a supplement of the Health Care Power of Attorney and Living Will, which ensures that your wishes for donating your organs or tissues are carried out. This form has been created for those who wish to help save or improve the quality of life of others who may suffer from organ failure, congenital defects, bone cancer, orthopedic injuries, burns and more. The **Organ/Tissue Donor Registration Form** can also be used for those who may amend or revoke your wishes for donation.

These additional orders may be written after consulting with your physician:

A **Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) Order** is specifically written by a doctor after discussion with the patient (or Health Care Power of Attorney) that indicates in the event of a cardiac or respiratory arrest, you do NOT want CPR attempted. You will still receive care not associated with resuscitative efforts, if needed or desired, such as diagnostic testing, artificial food, water and treatments.

A **Do-Not-Resuscitate Comfort Care Arrest (DNRCC-arrest) Order** indicates that the order, signed by patient and physician, will be used only when the patient actually suffers a cardiac or respiratory arrest. What this means is that no cardiac or respiratory efforts will be started whose purpose is solely resuscitation. Comfort measures will always be maintained.

Questions

Can a Health Care Power of Attorney pay for my medical bills?
The Health Care POA has no authority over your financial matters and is not obligated to pay for your healthcare. A separate document called a Business/Financial Power of Attorney can be completed with the assistance of an attorney appointing a trusted individual to handle your financial arrangements.

What do I do with my Advance Directives after completing them?
After completing your forms, make sure to designate a specified place to keep your originals, i.e. safe, bank lock box, your attorney's office. You may also want to make copies for those who may be involved in your healthcare decisions (your appointed representatives). We also encourage you to have a copy of your Advance Directives placed into your medical record at Firelands.

Our team of patient advocates and social work staff are happy to assist you and your family.

You can view or print the Advance Directives documents off our website at firelands.com.