



Jewish Home

Advance Directives

What is an Advance Directive?

An Advance Directive tells your health care team what kind of care you would like to have if you become unable to make decisions.

A good Advance Directive describes the kind of treatment you would want depending on how sick you are. Advance Directives often tell your doctor that you don't want certain kinds of treatment, but they can also advise that you do want certain treatments.

Advance Directives can take many forms. The most common types of Advance Directives are the Health Care Proxy form, the Living will, and in Monroe County, the MOLST form. None of these require a lawyer to complete.

What is the MOLST?

MOLST (Medical Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment) is a medical order form. It tells others, in the form of physician orders, your wishes for life sustaining treatments such as: cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), mechanical ventilation, future hospitalizations, feeding tubes and antibiotics.

When you are admitted to the Jewish Home, your physician, nurse, or social worker will discuss it with you and/or a family member. The physician will then complete the form according to your wishes and ask you to sign it. It will become part of your medical record while you are a resident of the Home and will be sent with you to other care settings such as a hospital. Hospital, ambulance technicians, and other nursing homes will honor the MOLST form's directions in Monroe County.

What is a Living Will?

A Living Will is another type of Advance Directive. It is a written document that describes the kind of medical treatment or life-sustaining treatment you would want if you were seriously or terminally ill. A Living Will doesn't let you select someone to make decisions for you and can sometimes be less clear on exactly what to do in a medical crisis.

What is a Health Care Proxy?

A Health Care Proxy allows you to select someone to make health care decisions for you in the event you are unable to do it yourself. This individual would make those decisions based on what you would like to have done. It is important that you have a discussion with that person so they fully understand your wishes.

What is a Durable Power of Attorney?

A durable Power of Attorney (POA) for health care is another kind of advance directive used in some states. It is roughly equivalent to a Health Care Proxy form. A DPA for medical matters states whom you have chosen to make health care decisions. It becomes active any time you are unable to make medical decisions. In New York this type of form is mainly used for transferring financial authority.

Living wills and DPAs are legal in most states but even if the law doesn't recognize them, they can still act as a useful guideline for your loved ones and doctors to make decisions.

What is a No Not Resuscitate (DNR) order?

A Do Not Resuscitate order (DNR) can be a specific decision in other Advance Directives. DNR is a request not to have cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) attempted if your heart stops beating or if you stop breathing. The "Non-Hospital DNR Form" is a specific form used in the community that is honored by emergency personnel. It is still valid but is being replaced by the MOLST form in Monroe County.

Should I have an Advance Directive?

By creating an Advance Directive, you are making your preferences about medical care known before you are faced with serious injury or illness. This will spare your loved ones the stress of making those decisions about your care while you are sick. They will know what your wishes are.