

PLAN TODAY FOR TOMORROW

You're wisely planning ahead by filling out an advance directive. By making your wishes known, you're removing any confusion about the kind of medical care you want. It can help your family, friends and doctors know they're doing the right thing for you.

What do I do with the advance directive once I have completed it?

Make copies. Give one copy to:

- your medical decision maker(s)
- your doctor
- each family member who would know if you were hospitalized
- your lawyer, if you have one (remember, your lawyer is not likely to be called if you are in a hospital and cannot make your decisions)

Keep the original and put it in a safe place where you can get it easily — not in a safe deposit box. Be sure to take a copy with you if you go to a hospital so it can be placed in your medical record. Your advance directive stays valid until you revoke or replace it.

What if I change my mind or want to add something?

If you want to change and/or add something, you should complete a new form. Let your medical decision maker(s), your family and your health care team know that you have a new form. Give copies of the new form to all the people who have copies of your original form and discuss the changes. Everyone should destroy the old forms after you have made a new one.

For more information:

Your doctor, nurse or social worker can answer questions about your advance directive.