

Do your doctor and your family know what you want?

When you are too sick or injured to make health care decisions, an Advance Directive can help.

What is an Advance Directive?

An Advance Directive is a legal document that tells your family, friends, and other health care professionals your wishes about the medical care you want when you are too sick or hurt to do so. You must be 18 years or older and of sound mind to write an Advance Directive. With this document, you can let your doctors know what medical treatment you do not want to have and what treatment you want. Black River Memorial honors all Advance Directives.



Other ways to make your wishes known:

- Talk to your family and friends
- Write your wishes down in a letter
- Complete a living will
- Complete a Power of Attorney for Health Care
- Complete a Providers Orders for Scope of Treatment Form
- Complete a Declaration to Physician Form
- Complete a Do Not Resuscitate Form

Having an Advance Directive is not required to get medical care and your medical care will not be affected if you choose not to have an Advance Directive. You can change your Advance Directive at any time as long as you continue to make your own decisions.

Emergency Care

Your written Advance Directive may not be available at the time of a medical crisis. Medical care will be provided to sustain your life during a medical crisis. Treatment can be stopped when your wishes regarding medical care are learned.

CPR will be attempted if your heart stops beating or you stop breathing. Please talk with your doctor if you do not want to receive CPR.

For information about completing an Advance Directive, CALL 715-284-5361 and ask to speak with a social worker.

When does a Power of Attorney for Health Care take effect?

The Power of Attorney for Health Care becomes effective when your doctor and another doctor or licensed psychologist have personally examined you and decide that you have become unable to evaluate information effectively or communicate your own health care decisions.

Who is in control after a Power of Attorney for Health Care is completed?

You remain in control of your medical care as long as you can make your own decisions. If you are unable to make your own health care decisions, your agent must act in good faith consistent with your wishes.

What kinds of decisions will my health care agent be able to make?

Decisions that your agent might make include choosing a doctor, treating a medical condition, managing pain, maintaining or refusing artificial hydration and nutrition, choosing a nursing care facility and, end-of-life. Health care decisions include decisions about services, procedures, treatment, and care.

Do I need a witness when I complete a Power of Attorney for Health Care?

Yes. Your Power of Attorney for Health Care must be signed by two witnesses who are at least 18 years old. Witnesses cannot be your Agent or alternate Agent, a relative, someone directly financially responsible for your health care, your health care provider, or an employee of a health care facility in which you are a patient; however, a social worker or chaplain in that facility may be a witness.

Does an Advance Directive have to be renewed?

Once signed, it does not need to be renewed. However, advance care planning is an ongoing process. If you made your Advance Directive years ago, you may want to review it periodically to see if it continues to express your wishes. You should review your wishes anytime your health care needs change. Complete a new document that expresses your current wishes.

Who should receive copies of my Advance Directive?

Your Advance Directive should be shared with your family, your physician(s), other health care providers where you are likely to receive care, and if you are completing a Power of Attorney for Health Care - your health care agent. You should keep the original in an accessible place.

Do I need a lawyer to make an Advance Directive?

You do not need a lawyer to complete a medical Advance Directive; however, you may wish to talk about the document with your attorney and provide him or her with a copy.

Where can I go to complete an Advance Directive?

Locally certified Advance Directive facilitators are available at Black River Memorial Hospital Patient and Family Services or Home-based Services at 715-284-5361 and the Jackson County Department of Health and Human Services Aging Unit at 715-284-4301. They can answer any questions you may have and will help you complete your Advance Directive at no cost.