

# Advance Directives

Your care is your decision



Samaritan  
Health Plans

**OUR MEMBERS. OUR NEIGHBORS.**

A wellness publication prepared  
for Samaritan Health Plans members

## Advance Directives

are not just for older adults. Unexpected situations can happen at any age, so it is important to have one if you are 18 or older.



## Why Create an Advance Directive?

Someday you could become so sick or injured, you may not be able to tell your health care providers which medical treatments you want. An advance directive is a written document that allows you to express your wishes for medical care if you are not able to speak for yourself.

If you do not have an Advance Directive, your providers may ask your family what to do – and if they cannot or will not decide, you will receive the standard medical treatment for your condition. If you are awake and alert, your providers will always listen to what you want.

Having your treatment decisions in writing will help you plan for the kind of care you want. It is important to create an Advance Directive while you are able to speak for yourself verbally, in writing or in sign language. Filling out an Advance Directive is your choice. Your health care providers cannot treat you differently based on whether or not you have an Advance Directive.

# Types of Advance Directives

## **Advance Directive Form**

This form is a legal document that can be used to assign someone you trust as your health care representative to make decisions for you. It also states how you want to be cared for if you are not able to make your own medical decisions.

## **Living Will**

A document providing specific instructions for your treatment, such as the use of breathing machines, blood transfusions and feeding tubes.

## **Medical Power of Attorney**

A legal document allowing you to assign someone to make medical care decisions for you if you are not able to. You should choose a family member, friend or other trusted person.

## **Do Not Resuscitate Order**

A Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order states that you do not want anyone to attempt to resuscitate (save) you if your breathing or heart stop.

## **Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST)**

This form is filled out by you and your health care provider. It provides orders to be followed by all medical personnel - including emergency medical technicians. A POLST is not valid without your health care provider's signature.



## Talk with Your Family

Talk with your family about your personal beliefs about life-sustaining treatments and end-of-life care. Give your loved ones the information they will need to make decisions for you. It is important to talk about:

- Would you want to try medical treatments to help extend your life?
- When would you want medical treatments to stop?
- Would being pain-free or remaining independent play a part in your decisions about your medical care?
- Are there religious, spiritual or moral beliefs that could affect your medical treatment?
- Do concerns about money impact decisions about your medical care?
- Would you want to receive fluids through a vein or receive food through a feeding tube?
- Would you want to receive Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) if your breathing or heart stops?
- Would you want to be permanently placed on a breathing machine?
- What would you like done with your body if you die?

# Talk with Your Health Care Provider

Your health care provider can help answer questions you may have about life-sustaining treatments and end-of-life care. Ask your provider what you should know about:

**Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)** – an emergency technique used if your heart or breathing stops.

**Comfort Measures** – medical treatments such as pain medication and oxygen to keep you comfortable.

**Feeding Tube** – a device used to supply nutrition when you have trouble eating or drinking.

**Ventilator** – a medical device that gives you oxygen if you are not able to breathe on your own.

## **Advance Directives give you the choice to:**

- Accept all treatments
- Accept treatments recommended by your health care provider
- Accept some treatments and refuse others
- Refuse all recommended treatments

You can choose to receive pain medication for comfort, even if you refuse other treatments.

# How to Get Started

Information about Advance Directives is available from your health care provider, local hospitals or an attorney. Advance Directives do not expire and remain in effect, unless you decide to change it.

Keep a copy of your Advance Directive for yourself, and give copies to your family members and health care provider. They can only follow your instructions if they have them.

## It's Your Right

Under Oregon Law, you have the right to create an Advance Directive. You also have the right to decide your own health care as long as you are able to — even if you have an Advance Directive. You can change your mind or cancel your Advance Directive at anytime. For questions or more information call Oregon Health Decisions at 800-422-4805.

Due to a moral or religious belief, you may have a wish that a health care provider or hospital is not able to follow. You should talk with them about your Advance Directive.

If your health care provider does not follow your Advance Directive, you can file a complaint. The complaint form can be found at [healthoregon.org/hcrqi](http://healthoregon.org/hcrqi).

Send your complaint to:

### **Health Care Regulation and Quality Improvement**

8700 NE Oregon St. #305, Portland, OR 97232

**Email:** [mailbox.hcls@state.or.us](mailto:mailbox.hcls@state.or.us)

**Phone:** 971-673-0540 (TTY: 971-673-0372)

**Fax:** 971-673-0556

# Support is Available

There are resources, classes and programs available to you. Some classes and programs may charge a fee that may be covered by your Samaritan health plan. Check your member handbook or call your plan for more information.

## **Oregon Advance Directive Form**

To download the Oregon Advance Directive Form go to [oregon.gov](http://oregon.gov) and enter “Advance Directive” in the search bar.

## **Oregon Health Decisions**

503-692-0894 / 800-422-4805  
[oregonhealthdecisions.org](http://oregonhealthdecisions.org)

Get the tools you need to start a conversation with your loved ones and complete your Advance Directive.

## **Living Well With Chronic Conditions**

866-243-7747

This six week workshop teaches practical skills for living a healthy life with an ongoing health condition.

## **Lifeline**

541-812-4703 / 800-242-1306 ext. 4520

A response service that helps Benton, Lincoln and Linn county residents to continue living in their homes, with confidence that they can get help at any time.

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Call 800-832-4580 (TTY: 800-735-2900).

Puede obtener este documento en otros idiomas, en letra grande, en braille o en un formato que usted prefiera sin cargo. Llame al 800-832-4580 (TTY: 800-735-2900).



**Samaritan  
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2300 NW Walnut Blvd, Corvallis  
800-832-4580 (TTY: 800-735-2900)

**[samhealthplans.org](http://samhealthplans.org)**

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