



Behavioral Health Associates

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Advance Care Planning

Advance Care Planning is the "process" of assisting individuals in understanding their medical condition and potential future complications; understanding the options for future medical care as it relates to their medical condition; discussing choices with family, loved ones, and providers; and reflecting upon these choices in light of personal values, goals, and religious or cultural beliefs. This planning process is vitally important, not only for older Americans or those who have a serious and/or progressive illness, but also for healthy younger adults who may lose the ability to speak for themselves because of trauma or a sudden unexpected illness.

As such, it demands guidance in uncovering the patient's story and facilitating shared decision making among patient, family, provider and others. It emphasizes the personal relationships embedded in making difficult choices for future medical care. Embracing this definition of advance care planning acknowledges that it is an ongoing process, not just the completion of one document.

National studies regarding end-of-life care for those who have not prepared indicate that we are failing by not addressing these issues early. According to the survey, most states received a "D" grade in advance care planning.

Advance Directives

There are four legal documents that protect one's right to specify the treatment one wants, or to refuse medical treatment one does not want, in the event a person loses the ability to make decisions.

1. Texas Medical Power of Attorney

- Lets you name someone to make decisions about your medical care-including decisions about life support-if you can no longer speak for yourself.
- Your attending physician must certify in writing that you are unable to make health care decisions, and file the certification in your medical record.

2. Texas Directive to Physicians and Family or Surrogates (Living Will)

- Lets you state your wishes about medical care in the event that you develop a terminal or irreversible condition and can no longer make your own medical decisions.
- Becomes effective when your attending physician certifies in writing that you are in a

terminal or irreversible condition.

3. The Out-of-Hospital Do Not Resuscitate Order (OOH DNR)

The OOH DNR program allows individuals to decide that they do not want to be resuscitated if they stop breathing and their heart stops beating. The program allows people to declare that certain resuscitative measures will not be used on them. Those resuscitative measures specifically listed in the OOH DNR legislation are cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), advanced airway management, defibrillation, artificial ventilations, and transcutaneous cardiac pacing.

4. The Declaration for Mental Health Treatment

Lets you state your wishes about mental health treatment.

Advance Directive Forms

TxPEC intends to help improve knowledge among individuals and families facing a life-limiting illness regarding advance care planning and the benefits of executing advance directive documents

Below are links to forms needed. The Out of Hospital Do Not Resuscitate information and forms in English and Spanish are available by going to:

<http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems/dnrhome.htm#forms>

Out of Hospital Do Not Resuscitate information

 www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems/dnrpresentation.PDF

Out of Hospital Do Not Resuscitate brochure

 www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems/dnrback.pdf

Out of Hospital Do Not Resuscitate form (English)

 www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems/dnr.pdf

Out of Hospital Do Not Resuscitate form (Spanish)

 www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems/dnrspanish.pdf

Additional information is available at Texas Department of Health, or you can obtain a copy from your physician or health provider. This form must be signed by a doctor to be valid.

Caring Conversations Workbook

A wonderful tool to assist you and your family to identify what type of care you want at the end of life. After completing this process, be sure to download, print and complete the three [Texas Advance Directive forms](#). Give copies of these forms to your loved ones and store in a safe place. For additional information visit: <http://www.midbio.org>

