

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

OVERVIEW

Patients have the constitutional right to make decisions regarding their own medical care. This right includes the right to refuse medical treatment, even if treatment is necessary to prevent the patient from dying. A patient's right to request that medical treatment be withheld or withdrawn does not change, even when the patient loses the capacity to make the request. An Advance Directive is a legal document intended to ensure that healthcare providers honor a patient's decisions regarding treatment, even when he or she is no longer able to communicate those decisions.

LESSON 1 ~ ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Define Advance Directive
- List the two types of Advance Directive, as well as two other types of Advance Order
- Explain the importance of Advance Directives for all patients over the age of 18
- Discuss the role of communication in end-of-life planning
- Recall when Advance Directives take effect
- Discuss the role of Advance Directives in medical emergencies

LESSON 2 ~ LIVING WILLS

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Define 'Living Will' and recall various other terms used to describe the same legal document.
- Recall the criteria for implementing a Living Will, including the definition of 'terminal illness.'
- Describe the contents of a Living Will.
- Discuss the role of Living Wills in relieving stress and guilt in family members of terminally ill patients.

LESSON 3 ~ MEDICAL POWER OF ATTORNEY

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Define 'Medical Power of Attorney' and recall other terms used to describe the same legal document.
- Recall when Medical Power of Attorney takes effect.
- Describe the characteristics of an effective healthcare proxy.
- Discuss the advantages of a patient's having both a living will and a healthcare proxy.

LESSON 4 ~ OTHER ADVANCE ORDERS

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Recall how a Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) order is issued.
- Discuss the effect of a DNR order on a patient's care.
- Explain the significance of a Medical Treatment Plan.

LESSON 5 ~ ROLE OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS AND FACILITIES

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Describe the role of healthcare providers in encouraging end-of-life planning.
- Discuss the legal and ethical obligations of healthcare providers, with respect to Advance Directives.
- Recall JCAHO standards regarding Advance Directives.

LESSON 6 ~ REQUIREMENTS FOR LONG TERM CARE FACILITIES

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Identify the function of the Patient Self-Determination Act.
- Recognize the requirements for notifying long-term care residents of the right to formulate Advance Directives.
- Identify instances in which a facility is not required to implement an Advance Directive.
- Recognize the role of surrogate decision-makers for residents who do not have Advance Directives.