

## WHY PUT IT IN WRITING?

- It relieves your mind of worry
- It helps you focus your thinking
- It is sound personal planning prior to a crisis
- It provides a documented message to your health care provider
- It makes it clear to others what decisions you would want made
- It provides comfort for those who might need to make decisions for you
- It resolves conflict if there are differences in opinion about your care
- It serves as clear evidence about what you want if decisions about you ever become a legal matter
- It is truly a gift to your family in a time of crisis

## WHERE CAN I OBTAIN A DOCUMENT OR RECEIVE ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETING ADVANCE DIRECTIVES?

To obtain a free document or receive assistance in completing the advance directive please call:

St. Joseph's Hospital  
Social Services  
(715) 726-3354

or

Chippewa Falls 2010: Achieving a  
Healthier Community  
(715) 726-3647



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**Your choice. Your Voice.  
Ask for St. Joseph's Hospital.**

## YOUR GUIDE TO ADVANCE DIRECTIVES



Advance directives are written documents designed to allow individuals the opportunity to guide future health care decisions in the event that they are unable to participate directly in medical decision making.

*YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE YOUR DOCUMENT REFLECTS YOUR CURRENT VIEWS, VALUES AND HEALTH CONDITION.*

Always continue to think about and discuss these issues with your health care agent (the person you appoint to make decisions for you) and those who are close to you. Their knowledge of your views will help assure that what you want is reflected in any future medical decisions.

Wisconsin Statutes recognize two forms of written advance directives—*Power of Attorney for Health Care and the Declaration to Physician (Living Will)*.

## **DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTH CARE:**

A legal document which makes it possible for adults in Wisconsin to authorize other individuals (called health care agents) to make health care decisions on their behalf should they become incapacitated. Incapacity is defined as the inability to receive and evaluate information effectively or to communicate decisions to such an extent that the individual lacks the capacity to manage his or her health care decisions. Incapacity is determined through the evaluation of two physicians or a physician and psychologist. It does not require the individual be in a terminal condition or persistent vegetative state before his or her agent can make health care decisions.

## **DECLARATION TO PHYSICIANS (LIVING WILL):**

This is a legal document that informs your physician regarding your preferences or wishes about life sustaining measures to be used when you are near death or in a persistent vegetative state.

*AS LONG AS YOU ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE YOUR OWN DECISIONS, YOU REMAIN IN CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH CARE CHOICES.*