

This pamphlet informs you about your right to make health care decisions, including the right to accept or refuse medical treatment. It explains the following advance directives and related subjects:

1 Medical Durable Power of Attorney

2 Living Wills

3 CardioPulmonary Resuscitation (CPR Directive)

4 Substitute Decision Makers (Medical Proxies)

5 Guardians

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Colorado Health
& Hospital Association

YOUR RIGHT TO MAKE HEALTH CARE DECISIONS

Federal law directs that any time you are admitted to any health care facility, or served by certain organizations that receive Medicare or Medicaid money, you must be told about Colorado's laws concerning your right to make health care decisions. This requirement applies to all adult patients no matter what their medical condition. This pamphlet is designed to provide information about your rights under Colorado law to accept or refuse medical treatment, including life support. These are important personal health care decisions and they deserve careful thought. It's a good idea to talk about them with your doctor, family, friends, staff members of your health care facility and possibly a lawyer.

You have the right to consent to (accept) or refuse any medical care and treatment, unless care is ordered by a court. In an emergency, your consent to resuscitation, medical care and treatment is assumed.

If and when you are unable to make your own decisions, Colorado law allows your guardian or your agent "appointed" or "named" under a **medical durable power of attorney** to make your health care decisions. In the absence of an advance medical directive or guardian, Colorado law allows a person close to you to be a substitute decision maker (proxy). In the absence of advance directives, Colorado law requires the physician or the physician's designee to make reasonable efforts to contact those close to the patient for the purpose of seeking a substitute decision maker (proxy).

Medical Durable Power of Attorney and **Living Will** forms which you can use are included as part of this pamphlet. It should be noted, however, that other forms are also acceptable.

Your Right to Make Health Care Decisions

Your Right to Make Health Care Decisions is available through the Colorado Health and Hospital Association as a public service to the community. This brochure explains Advanced Directives, which are written instructions about your wishes for medical treatment. They are used if you are unable to make your own health care decisions. It contains forms for a **Living Will** and a **Medical Durable Power of Attorney**. Both English and Spanish versions are available on this website. Feel free to print the brochure and forms for your personal use. Colorado hospitals, physicians, and other health care facilities and providers also offer *Your Right to Make Health Care Decisions* or other versions of **Living Will** and **Medical Durable Power of Attorney** forms for your use. Other forms also are acceptable.

As you use *Your Right to Make Health Care Decisions*, we recommend the following:

- Do not alter the printed language on the forms. If you do so, you could invalidate the legal intent of the documents. If you wish to change the language, you should consult an attorney.
- These documents are specific to Colorado. Please be advised what works in Colorado may not be effective in other states. If you plan to use this in another state, you should consult an attorney or a knowledgeable healthcare provider in that state to see if these documents will be accepted there.
- Make sure a copy is provided to your physician and to members of your family and friends who may become involved in the event you are unable to make your own health care decisions.

By providing *Your Right to Make Health Care Decisions*, the Colorado Health and Hospital Association assumes no legal liability for the enforceability or validity of the documents in any individual situation. We regret we are unable to provide advice to you about how to complete the forms.

The third form you may wish to consider is referred to as a CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) Directive or a DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) directive. The State of Colorado has an approved Colorado CPR Directive form, identifiable by a double heart logo. Your physician's office should have these. In Colorado, a CPR Directive must be signed by your physician and becomes part of your medical record. Your physician can obtain the Colorado CPR Directive forms by calling Progressive Services, Inc. (PSI) at 303-455-1420.