

Your Role as a Health Care Agent

General Information

You agreed to be a health care agent for a family member or friend. This means you can make health care decisions on this person's behalf in case injury or illness prevents him or her from speaking.

Your Role and Responsibilities

Your role and responsibilities include the following.

- Review the health care directive with your family member or friend. Ask questions if you need more information.
- Bring these documents with you to the hospital:
 - health care directive
 - POLST form
 - organ or body donation information.
- Speak up and ask questions of the health care team. Take notes.
- Honor and respect the health care directive wishes to the best of your ability, even if you do not agree with them. These include cultural and religious wishes.
- Review and release medical records. You may need to fill out a request or authorization form to get the records.
- Make choices about choosing medical care and managing pain. You can:
 - ask for a second opinion
 - move from one care setting to another
 - choose other health care providers
 - arrange for care and treatment in any state or location you think is appropriate.
- Make choices about personal care. This includes:
 - keeping your family member or friend clean and comfortable
 - providing dignity to your family member or friend.
- Update others on your family member's or friend's condition.
- Tell your family member or friend if you are no longer willing or able to be a health care agent.