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Center for Healthy Aging Ministries, Programs & Services

Facilitator's Guide

Honoring My Wishes



Note:

Situations A through D used in this module have been taken from ***The Gift of Peace of Mind*** by Marian A. Brenton, M.P.A., R.N. and Lon N. Larson, Ph.D., Drake Center for Health Issues, Updated Oct. 2000.

Please refer to references and resources listed at the end of this document for an extensive listing of the materials reviewed during the preparation of this module.

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Honoring My Wishes

This is a basic educational program on completing advance directives designed for a lay audience.

NOTE: The Facilitator Guidelines for Implementing Modules is available for download on the module page.

This module includes:

Facilitator Notes are suggested directions for the presenter.

Additional Information for Facilitator provides expanded coverage of the topic presented on each slide of the power point.

The Participants Guide outlines the program content for attendees.

Power Point Program: **Honoring My Wishes**

The power point program may be reproduced as slides, note pages, handouts or in outline form depending on the presenters' personal preference.

Handouts are prepared as information for distribution to participants. Facilitator notes indicate their placement within the presentation of the topic

Please note:

The forms and laws pertaining to advance directives may vary from state to state. Always check with your local health care provider or an attorney if in doubt about what actions you should take. The content of this module may change and new literature, laws and guidelines may evolve; therefore, consult reliable resources in your immediate area with questions of concern to you. Always consult with your personal physician or qualified health care provider regarding your health questions, individual health needs, and to obtain medical advice.

Honoring My Wishes

Description of Content:

As long as you are able, you have the right to make your own self-determinations for health care. But when there are unexpected accidents or if declining health issues arise you need to be sure that you have taken the critical steps to communicate your wishes. There are **legal papers** that must be completed and **careful conversations that need to be held with doctors and loved ones** so they know your preferences regarding your health care and final arrangements.

Modern medical technology gives us many more choices than in the past, but this compounds the decision-making process. Not all medical treatment gives us the quality of life we want. It is important for you to know what you want and to take steps so others understand your wishes.

This module will help you explore the options for making your wishes known regarding the health care decisions you want made on your behalf, if you are ever unable to make them. By preparing an advance directive (living will and/or advance directive for health care) now, you give your family the gift of knowing they have followed your wishes and by so doing they are honoring you.

Objectives: At the end of this presentation, you will be able to:

Recognize the difference between a living will and an advance directive for health care.

Decide and describe the kind of health care you desire to receive in your final days or in circumstances where you are unconscious or mentally incapacitated.

Describe the benefits for you and your family of completing an advance directive before a crisis occurs or the need.

Complete the needed paperwork and understand the importance of communicating

Recognize this process of helping families to prepare for and adjust to an impending death is founded in scripture.

Establish a plan for communicating your wishes to your physician and family.

Recognize the importance of reviewing, updating and keeping others informed as your health condition changes and/or your desires change.

Note: A Glossary to Assist Families to Understand Medical and Legal Terms is available in the *Honoring My Wishes* booklet.

References & Resources

Advance Directives:

1. To help patients, families and the hospitals that serve them, the American Hospital Association (AHA), with the cooperation of other organizations, has compiled key resources to enhance educational efforts and raise awareness around this important issue (advanced directives). This site includes Spanish versions of information.
Put it in Writing
Website: www.putitinwriting.org
2. Planning ahead is about preparing for the future today. Communicating your end-of-life wishes to your loved ones, appointing a healthcare power of attorney, and addressing financial issues such as wills and paying for long-term care are just a few of the issues that can address today to plan ahead.
Are You Planning Ahead?
Website: <http://www.caringinfo.org>
3. Information produced by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) and NHPCO-member hospice professionals to assist in enhancing the quality of life for people dying in American and their loved ones.
Communicating Your End-of-Life Wishes
Website: <http://ag.ca.gov/consumers/pdf.CELW.pdf>
4. This site contains useful information on advance directives and the advantages of having a surrogate (health care proxy) representation.
Ethical Dilemmas at the End of Life: Questions and Answers Regarding Advance Directives (Living With Grief)
Website: <http://www.hospicefoundation.org/teleconference/2005/qa.asp#advance>
5. Good advance planning for health care decisions is, in reality, a continuing conversation - about values, priorities, the meaning of one's life, and quality of life. To help you in this process, this tool kit contains a variety of self-help worksheets, suggestions, and resources.
Consumer's Toolkit for Healthcare Planning developed by American Bar Association
Website: <http://www.abanet.org/aging/toolkit/>
6. Caring Conversations® is a consumer education initiative that helps individuals and their families share meaningful conversation while making practical preparations for end-of-life decisions. Information is available in English and Spanish.
Website: www.practicalbioethics.org

This guide was prepared to assist different groups to explore personal views, talk with loved ones and make tough decisions. The content can be adapted to meet the needs of different groups.

1. Talking It Over: A Guide for Group Discussions on End-of-Life Decisions

Website: www.sachealthdecisions.org/docs/TIO.pdf

2. Five Wishes site for ordering this advance directive form. Meets District of Columbia and 40 other state requirements for advance directives.

Aging with Dignity: Website: <http://www.agingwithdignity.org/5wishes.html>

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CPR Information:

Information provided in article on pros and cons of receiving CPR and mechanical ventilation. These articles are not a substitute for discussing this subject with your physician who has intimate knowledge of your health condition(s).

Should I receive CPR and mechanical ventilation? (Three separate articles)

1. Website: <http://www.revolutionhealth.com/conditions/heart-attack/palliativecare/mechanical-ventilation>

2. Website: <http://12.31.13.9/library/healthguide/enus/illnessconditions/topic.asp?hwid=tu2951>

3. Website: <http://www.ascocancerfoundation.org/patient/Coping/End-of-Life+Care/Understanding+CPR+and+DNR>

Artificial Nutrition and Hydration Information:

Information on artificial nutrition and hydration should be discussed with your personal physician who will have intimate knowledge of your health status and conditions. The following websites will help broaden your understanding of this issue:

1. Artificial Hydration and Nutrition: When do people need artificial hydration and nutrition? (Also includes a Spanish version of the information.)

Website: <http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/pat-advocacy/endoflife/629.html>

2. Some Facts About Artificial Nutrition and Hydration:

Website: <http://endoflifecare.tripod.com/Caregiving.id90.html>

3. Artificial Nutrition (Food) and Hydration (Fluids) at the End of Life

Website: <http://www.caringinfo.org/UserFiles/File/PDFs/>

[ArtificialNutritionAndHydration.pdf](#)

4. Questions and Answers: Artificial Nutrition and Hydration and End-of-Life Decision Making

Website: <http://www.webmd.com/content/pages/23/110914.htm>

Legal Consultation:

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) can facilitate connecting seniors with legal services in their region. Individuals must be over 60 and the services are free to individuals with low to moderate incomes.

Living Wills and Trusts

Power of Attorney

Medicare and Medicaid

Retirement benefits and move

To locate services in Nebraska:

Call 1-800-942-7830 or 402-471-4623

OR

To find out more information about legal services through AAA in your region:

Website: <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/ags/legal.htm>

The *Law and Aging Guide* is a comprehensive listing of the state-wide resources available to help older persons with law-related issues. Published by the American Bar Association Commission on Law and Aging, the *Guide* includes important contact numbers and addresses for legal assistance providers and other law-related services for the elderly. Many states now have toll-free senior legal hotlines. If you are an older person (or family member or trusted friend of an older person) who needs legal advice or assistance, the first step is to see if your state has a hotline, and, if it does, to call the hotline.

Links to Legal Services Providers for Older Americans

(Center for Social Gerontology)

Website: <http://www.tcsq.org/lslinks.htm>

If in doubt, contact your personal attorney for advice.

Finally, there is no substitute for praying, following your beliefs and values and making your decisions based on faith, family and the information you receive from your religious, health, legal and financial resources.