

Advance Care Planning

Your Care, Your Choices

What Is Advance Care Planning?

Advance care planning helps your family, friends, and health care team understand how you want to be cared for if you become very sick, injured, or unable to make your own medical decisions. It includes thinking about the kind of medical care you would want in different situations and documenting your choices.

Advance care planning also means choosing someone you trust to speak for you and share your wishes if you cannot speak for yourself. Writing down and sharing your wishes helps make sure the care you receive matches what matters most to you.

Why Is Advance Care Planning Important?

- Helps your voice to be heard and your health care wishes known.
- Protects your rights to make choices about your medical care.
- Guides your family when making difficult medical treatment decisions.
- Supports your health care team to treat you in ways that match your personal values and wishes.

What Is an Advance Health Care Directive?

An advance health care directive is a legal form that writes down your medical wishes from advance care planning. This form lets you choose a trusted person, called a health care agent, to speak for you if you cannot speak for yourself.

Your advance health care directive helps your health care agent and medical team understand what care and treatments you would or would not want if you become very sick or injured.

Anyone age 18 or older can benefit from talking about advance care planning and filling out an advance health care directive.

How to File an Advance Health Care Directive?

If you are interested in completing an Advance health care directive, you can contact your primary care team to learn more about advance care planning. Your primary care provider can assist in completing the form, but you may also fill it out on your own.

For the document to be legally valid, the advance health care directive must be signed with witnesses or notarized. Your primary care team can help notarize the form and make sure it is added to the Alaska Native Medical Center electronic health record so your care team can see your wishes.

What Should You Consider Prior to Filing?

Think about your medical wishes and what matters most to you. Take time to learn about your health and talk with your primary care provider about treatments that may or may not help if you become very sick or injured. Identify someone you trust who knows you well. This person could speak for you and share your wishes if you are not able to speak for yourself.

Learn More

Call your primary care team at 907-729-3300 to schedule an appointment to discuss advance care planning.

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