



Atrium Health



You've made your choices. Now what?

Share Your Decisions

Once you've completed your advance directive, it can only be followed if others know about it. It's a good idea to talk with your loved ones about your decisions and give copies of your advance directive to those who may be involved in your health care. Below is a list of the steps you should take to make sure your choices will be honored.

- Keep your original advance directive in a safe place where loved ones can easily find and access it.
- Give a copy of your completed advance directive to your health care agent, as well as any other written information you have that may help your agent make decisions for you.
- When going to an appointment or being admitted to any of the following places, take a copy of your advance directive and ask for it to be placed into your medical record.
 - Your doctors' offices
 - A hospital, rehabilitation center or nursing home
 - Home care agencies
- North Carolina has an electronic registry where your advance directive can be stored and accessed by any medical professionals in the state for a small fee. You can learn more about it on the North Carolina Secretary of State's website, sosnc.gov/ahc.

Encourage your loved ones to learn how to make choices about their own future care at
AtriumHealth.org/YourCareYourChoice.

Talk to Your Loved Ones

It is important to share your choices with your loved ones. Tell them who will be in charge of your health care decisions and share what type of decisions you have asked your agent to make for you. The more they know now, the less they have to worry later. Some find this topic difficult to discuss with people close to them. If you need help finding ways to start the conversation with your loved ones, below you will find some suggestions.

- "I've been thinking about what happened to (someone you know), and I've made some decisions I'd like to share with you."
- "I've chosen (agent's name) as the person who will make health care decisions for me if I can't speak for myself. I want you to know what I've asked them to choose for me."
- "If we don't talk about this now, we could end up in a situation that is even more uncomfortable."

Your loved ones may make different decisions for their own end-of-life medical treatments. To help them understand what matters most to you, use the statements below.

- My life would not be worth living if...
- At the end of my life, what matters most to me is...

You can always make changes to or cancel your advance directive. If you want to change or cancel your advance directive, you should destroy any copies of your old forms and replace them with the new forms. It is also a good idea to communicate your changes to your health care provider, health care agent and loved ones.

The only person who can change your Living Will and Health Care Power of Attorney is you. The only exception to that rule is if you gave that power to your health care agent when completing your Health Care Power of Attorney form.

