

Advance Care Planning Introduction – Making Choices[®]

What if you had a sudden illness or injury and could not speak for yourself? Who would you want to speak for you? What would you want them to know about your health care goals, values and preferences?

Advance care planning (ACP) is a process that helps you:

- Think about your goals and values.
- Reflect on health care decisions you may need to make in the future.
- Select a person to make decisions for you if you cannot make them yourself.
- Make a written plan for the future.

This is a way to talk about what matters most to you. This conversation is the best way to prepare your health care agent and others to act on your behalf.

What is an advance directive?

It is important to write down your goals, values and preferences. There are many ways to do this. We recommend using a document called an advance directive. The type used most often by our patients is a legal document called a power of attorney for health care. It lets you name a person to make health care decisions for you. He or she will only make decisions if you cannot make them yourself. You may also include specific instructions for care you prefer.

An advance directive may be changed any time as long as you are capable. You may revoke your advance directive at any time. A copy of your advance directive belongs in your medical record. Keep a copy for yourself. Give copies to your health care agent(s) and anyone close to you who is likely to be present in a medical crisis.

Start planning now

Make an appointment with an ACP facilitator today to start this process.

At no cost to you, this experienced staff member will help you think about your goals, values and preferences. He or she can guide a conversation with your loved ones about future medical decisions. By going through this process, your health care agent and /or loved ones will be able to act on your behalf with confidence.

For more information

Do you have questions? Would you like to meet with one of our advance care planning facilitators? Ask any Gundersen staff member, send a message through MyCare or call:

Advance Care Planning

(608) 775-6000 or (800) 362-9567, ext. 56000

Or visit gundersenhealth.org/advance-care

For assistance closer to home

Trained staff at many Gundersen regional clinics can help you prepare your advance directive. The first step is a conversation about future healthcare decisions.

If you would like to make an appointment to meet with someone **at your local clinic**, please call the number below. You can also call one of the numbers above and ask where the nearest ACP facilitator is available.

Clinic _____

ACP facilitator _____

Call to make an appointment _____

(Phone number)

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This information is meant to inform and educate our patients. It supports the care you receive from your health care team. It does not replace medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment. Talk to your doctor or health care team before starting any new treatment.

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