

How to Complete an Advance Directive and a Power of Attorney for Health Care

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What are Advance Directives?

Advance Directives are written instructions that state what your choices are regarding health care decisions. This written document is a guide for your physicians and loved ones in the event that you can't speak for yourself. It is a way in which you can ensure that your beliefs and wishes are known. It takes the burden off of your loved ones, and gives your health care providers an understanding of how you want to be cared for. They are called Advance Directives because they are done in advance, prior to you actually needing them.

What is a Power of Attorney for Health Care?

A Power of Attorney for Health Care document is a type of an Advance Directive. It allows you to appoint one or more agents and gives them the legal authority to make health care decisions for you if you are unable to make those decisions yourself at some point in the future. The document also allows you to clarify some of your health care choices (i.e.- how you feel about CPR, tube feeding, ventilator support, pain management, etc.) to assist your agent(s) and your health care team so that they know exactly what you want and do not want.

Who Should Complete a Power of Attorney for Health Care?

Every adult who has the capacity to make decisions for themselves should have this document in place

and complete one if you haven't already. This document protects you and your family if something should happen to you in the future and you would be unable to speak for yourself as to what your healthcare wishes are.

When does this document go into effect?

The Power of Attorney for Health Care document only goes into effect if a person lacks the capacity to make decisions for themselves at some point in the future. The document then becomes "activated" if two physicians or, one physician and one psychologist (or one advanced practice clinician such as a nurse practitioner), determines that the incapacity to make decisions exists.

Do I need a Lawyer to Draft a Power of Attorney for Health Care document?

The good news is that you do not need to use a lawyer to draft a Power of Attorney for Health Care document and, creating one is free. You can complete it on your own with the exception of needing your signature witnessed by two adults who are unrelated to you and who are not going to be your healthcare agent. Many people utilize neighbors, friends, their financial institution or Social Workers to help them witness their signature. The document does not need to be notarized.

How do I access the Power of Attorney for Health Care document for the State of Wisconsin?

Go to this website where the most current version of the document can be found:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms/advdirectives/adformspoa.htm

Or, contact us and we will help you.

To find out more about **Advance Directives and Power of Attorney for Health Care** call Clement Manor at **(414) 546-7000** to speak with our Concierge Team. | clementmanor.com

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