

**IT IS YOUR RIGHT TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR MEDICAL TREATMENT OR TO APPOINT SOMEONE TO DO IT FOR YOU, IN THE EVENT THAT YOU CANNOT.**

**This form will explain to you what Health Care Advance Directives are and how to go about completing one for yourself or a loved one.**

**WHAT IS A HEALTH CARE ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?**

Advance Directives are legal documents in which patient's express their wishes about the kind of health care they want to receive should they become unable to make their own treatment decisions. There are two types of Advance Directives: the Living Will and the Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care.

**WHAT IS A LIVING WILL?**

A living will is a legal document in which patients are able to state in advance their desire to receive or their desire to withhold life support procedures when they are permanently unconscious or terminally ill and unable to make informed decisions.

**WHAT IS A DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY?**

The Durable Power of attorney for Health Care is a document that allows patients to specify in advance who should make health care decisions for them should they become unable to make their own health care decisions. The individual named is the "agent" or "attorney in fact" for the patient.

**WHO CAN I PICK AS AN "AGENT"?**

You can choose any adult relative or friend that you trust as your "agent" or "attorney in fact". This person will speak for you when you are too sick to make your own decisions. After you have chosen an agent, you should sit down with this person and discuss, in detail, what your wishes are concerning your health care management.

**DO I NEED AN ATTORNEY?**

**You do not need an attorney to complete these forms.** You need two witnesses to sign the forms. One of these witnesses can be related and the other cannot be related by blood or marriage. If the form is notarized, you will not need the two witnesses. At CBCC there is a notary on staff at no charge to the patient.

**WHAT DO I DO WITH THE FORMS ONCE THEY ARE COMPLETE?**

Once the forms are completed, you should make several copies. The copies are just as valid as the original. You should give a copy to your doctor to keep on file. You should also take a copy with you when you go to the hospital or any treatment facility. If you have these forms notarized at CBCC, they will make the copies for you.

**WHY SHOULD I COMPLETE AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?**

A Health Care Advance Directive can relieve family stress. By expressing your wishes in advance, you help family or friends who might otherwise struggle to decide on their own what you would want them to do. A Health Care Advance Directive is not limited to cases of terminal illness. If you cannot make or communicate decisions because of a temporary or permanent illness or injury, a Health Care Advance Directive helps you keep control over health care decisions that are important to you.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT OUR SOCIAL WORKER:**

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