

THE MEDICAL CENTER OF CENTRAL GEORGIA

GEORGIA ADVANCE DIRECTIVE FOR HEALTH CARE INFORMATION

YOUR RIGHT TO DECIDE: COMMUNICATING YOUR HEALTHCARE CHOICES

Introduction

Questions about medical care at the end of life are very important today because of the ability of medical technology to prolong life and because of highly publicized court cases involving comatose or dying patients. The best way for you to be in control of your medical treatment is to record your wishes in advance.

What are Advance Directives?

Georgia Advance Directives for Health Care (AD) is a document written in advance of serious illness or injury which state your choices about medical treatment. It also names someone to make choices about medical treatment for you, if you become unable to make decisions. Through advance directives, you can make legally valid choices about future medical treatment.

What Does Georgia Law Say About This Subject?

You have the right to refuse any medical or surgical treatment you do not wish to receive. Georgia law allows you to sign ad-

vance directives so your wishes will be followed, even if you become unable to communicate them to your healthcare provider.

Are Advance Directives Just for "Senior Citizens"?

No. A severe illness or injury can happen to a person of any age. If you have strong feelings about what choices you would want made in such a situation, regardless of your age, you are encouraged to consider signing an advance directive.

Can an Advance Directive be Changed?

Advance directives can be changed or stopped at any time. If you made changes to an AD, be sure to destroy all of the outdated copies. You should provide copies of the new version to your family, your doctor and your attorney, if you have one.

Will an Advance Directive be Honored in an Emergency?

Most of the time it is impossible to know the chances of survival in an emergency or to decide the outlook for recovery. After

the initial emergency has passed, and depending on your condition, your advance directives will be consulted and carried out if indicated.



Is it Difficult to Stop a Treatment Once it Has Been Started?

No, not if you have an AD and your wishes are clear. If your condition changes suddenly, it may take days or even weeks before the outlook for recovery is known. During this time, it is OK to use any treatments that might be helpful. When the outlook for recovery is known, if your AD shows you would not want to continue treatment, it can be stopped.

Is there a Time Limit on How Long my Advance Directive is Valid?

No, but you should review and update your AD every year or two.

To Our Valued Patient:

You have asked for more information about advance directives. Thank you for your interest.

We hope this information helps answer some of your questions. If, after reading this, you should decide you want to complete advance directives for health care, please feel free to contact me.

- By Phone
- Email
- Have your nurse contact me

I am available to discuss specifics about the Georgia Advance Directive for Health Care.

Thank you for choosing The Medical Center of Central Georgia.

Sincerely,

Georold Rogers

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Advance Directive Coordinator
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The Georgia Department of Medical Assistance has approved this brochure for distribution under the requirements of federal law.

Where Can I Get a Form?

- *The Medical Center of Central Georgia*
777 Hemlock Street
HB 47
Macon, GA 31201
- *Medical Association of Georgia*
1330 W. Peachtree St. NW
500
Atlanta, GA 30309
- *Georgia Hospital Association*
1675 Terrell Mill Road
Marietta, GA 30067
- *State Bar of Georgia*
104 Marietta St. NW
Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30303



MORE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Are There Any Limits on Carrying Out The Instructions in my Directive if I am Pregnant?

Yes. Most likely any instructions which would result in withholding or withdrawing life-prolonging treatments would not be honored during the time you are pregnant.

After I Complete an Advance Directive, What Should I do With it?

Copies of an advance directive should be given to someone who would know if you become seriously ill. You should also give a copy to your doctor and you may want to consider giving a copy to your minister, family members or close friends. Of course, if you appoint an agent to make healthcare decisions for you, you should give a copy of your advance directives to the agent. Finally, you should consider carrying a card in your wallet stating you have signed an advance directive and where

it is located.

In order for a hospital to honor your advance directive, you must provide a copy of the document to someone at the hospital—a doctor, nurse, social worker or chaplain—so it can be included in your medical records.

Will my Georgia Advance Directive be Honored if I am Admitted for Treatment in a Different State?

The law honoring advance directives differs from state to state, so it is unclear whether a Georgia advance directive would be valid in a different state. Because an advance directive details your wishes about medical care, it will effect that care no matter where you are admitted. However, if you spend a great deal of time in more than one state, you might want to consider signing an advance directive that meets what is required of each state.

Can I be Refused Admission to a Hospital if I do Not Have an Advance Directive?

No. Federal law prohibits a hospital from refusing to admit a patient because he or she does not have an advance directive. However, as of December 1991, hospitals must: (1) ask adult inpatients if they have an AD (2) write down their answers and (3) provide information on state laws and hospital policies about advance directives.

Does This Hospital Have a Policy About Advance Directives?

Yes. It is the policy of The Medical Center of Central Georgia to honor a patient's advance directive, if it meets the requirements of state law. We are also aware of and respect the right of patients to accept or reject offered medical or surgical treatment to the extent permitted by law.

Georgia Advance Directive Card

I have signed Georgia Advance Directive for Health Care

Person to Contact: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

The Medical Center of Central Georgia

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