

## Introduction to Advance Health Care Directives

California law gives you the ability to insure that your health care wishes are known and considered if you become unable to make these decisions yourself

### What is an Advance Health Care Directive?

An Advance Health Care Directive is the best way to make sure that your health care wishes are known and considered if for any reason you are unable to speak for yourself. Completing a form called an “Advance Health Care Directive” allows you, under California law, to do either or both of two things:

First, you may appoint another person to be your health care “agent”. This person (who may also be known as your “attorney-in-fact”) will have legal authority to make decisions about your medical care if you become unable to make these decisions for yourself.

Second, you may write down your health care wishes in the Advance Health Care Directive form. For example, a desire not to receive treatment that only prolongs the dying process if you are terminally ill. Your doctor and your agent must follow your lawful instructions.

The booklet “Finding Your Way” is a useful guide to thinking about and discussing these issues. To receive a copy send \$1.50 to CAHHS, Sales Center, P.O. Box 340100, Sacramento, CA 95834. You can also view the booklet on [www.sachealthdecisions.org](http://www.sachealthdecisions.org).

For more information about end-of life medical decisions, go to [www.finalchoices.calhealth.org](http://www.finalchoices.calhealth.org), the website for the California Coalition for Compassionate care or [www.sachealthdecisions.org](http://www.sachealthdecisions.org) the website for Sacramento Healthcare Decisions. You may also call the Partnership for Caring at 800-989-9455 to receive forms and general information.

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Patient Signature

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Date

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Physician’s Representative Signature

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Date