



## **What is Advance Care Planning (ACP) and Advance Directive (AD)?**

Advance care planning (ACP) is designed to help you decide what is important to you, usually done by working with a trained facilitator. This should help you develop your “goals of care.”

An advance directive (AD) is a legal document that you create with a facilitator and/or an attorney, though an attorney is not required. This document designates your chosen person as your health care power of attorney (HCPOA). A health care power of attorney is usually one person (a family member or friend), and you may designate a backup person. A HCPOA is like the vice president of your health care. Your HCPOA is only on standby unless you’re not capable of communicating your medical wishes.

### **Why should you complete an advance directive to get a HCPOA?**

First and foremost, to get the care **you** want should you be unable to speak for yourself. Next, to reduce the burden to those who care about **you**. This prevents your loved ones from guessing what you would want done to follow your goals of care. It also allows you to appoint someone who understands **your** wishes and goals of treatment to be your advocate for the care **you** want should you be unable to speak for yourself.

### **How to Choose and Maintain a Health Care Power of Attorney (HCPOA), aka Vice President of *Your* Health Care**

1. Someone **you** trust and who will be available.
2. Tell your HCPOA **your** goals of care.
3. Someone who says they will follow **your** goals of care after they know what your goals of care are. Make sure you ask directly if they will follow **your** goals of care.
4. Someone willing to listen to your doctor explain your medical situation.
5. Someone willing to ask your doctor to clarify any questions they are unsure about.
6. 4 & 5 are important so your HCPOA can make decisions that, given the medical situation and prognosis, align with **your** goals of care.
7. If your goals of care change let your HCPOA know.

Now that you have your “goals of care” and have chosen your HCPOA, you just need to get a blank AD from the state of Wisconsin or the Wisconsin Medical Society by going to:

<https://www.wismed.org/wismed/about-us/advance-care-planning/wismed/about-us/advance-care-planning.aspx>

Fill out the AD, sign it, and have 2 disinterested adults witness your HCPOA document at the same time. Witnesses **may not be** your agent, doctor, hospital, clinic employee (except for social workers or clergy), or close relative.

1. Tell your family and friends who you have chosen to be your HCPOA. This serves 2 purposes: First, to increase the respect they have for your HCPOA. Second, it may gently encourage those without a HCPOA to create one.
2. Give a copy of your Advance Directive to your HCPOA, your doctor, anyone else who you feel should have it, and keep one for yourself. Make and keep a list of everyone who has a copy of your HCPOA.
3. If your AD includes a desire to be a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) patient you need to have your doctor write a DNR order, give you a copy, and place the order in the health care system.
4. Remember the 6 “Ds”:
  - a) review your AD at least every 10 years (decade)
  - b) new significant diagnosis
  - c) death of your agent
  - d) divorce if your spouse is your agent
  - e) if you experience a significant decline in your health
  - f) new significant disability

Next visit with your doctor, make sure they can locate your AD in the medical record.