

## Advance Directives for Healthcare Questions & Answers

### What are advance directives for health care?

Advance directives are useful if I am unable to make my own decisions about my healthcare. An advance directive is a written document in which I state what type of medical care I want in the future. It also says who I want to make decisions for me when I cannot.

### What should I do?

- I need to make my treatment wishes known. I need to talk to my advocate so they know what my wishes are in the event I cannot make my own decisions.
- I need to choose a patient advocate who will follow through with my decisions.
- My advocate can be any person 18 years or older. I need to pick someone who I can trust and who can handle the responsibility. My advocate must be willing to follow my wishes when I cannot speak for myself.
  - I might have a temporary loss of ability to make my medical decisions. For example, if I had a stroke or were knocked unconscious in a car accident, I may need a patient advocate.
  - I might have lasting loss of ability through a condition such as dementia.
  - My doctor and one other doctor will determine if I am unable to make medical decisions.
- My wishes must be stated in writing.
- My patient advocate must agree in writing to be my advocate.
- All documents need to be witnessed by two non-family members.

### Why is it important for me to do this?

I have my own values, wishes and goals. Having an advanced directive provides me peace of mind that my personal wishes will be honored at a time when I am not able to express them.

### For more information:

- I can call Bronson Medical Social Work at 269-341-6001.
- I can find more information at:
  - [Advance Directives State of Michigan](#)  
Or go to the website:  
[http://michigan.gov/documents/mdch/mdch\\_AdvanceDirectivesPamphlet\\_196639\\_7.doc](http://michigan.gov/documents/mdch/mdch_AdvanceDirectivesPamphlet_196639_7.doc)
  - [Advance Directive Form](#)  
Or go to the website:  
[https://www.bronsonhealth.com/app/files/public/1187/9000354\\_appointment\\_of\\_patient\\_advocate.pdf](https://www.bronsonhealth.com/app/files/public/1187/9000354_appointment_of_patient_advocate.pdf)