



Advance Care Planning

What type of medical care would you want if you became too sick to tell the doctor yourself? Plan ahead to make sure you get the health care you want.

What is an Advance Directive?

An advance directive tells your medical team and loved ones what kind of care you would like to receive if you become unable to communicate for yourself or make your own medical decisions. It only becomes active if you cannot communicate your own wishes. In short, an advance directive ensures your right to accept or refuse medical care. You can say, “yes” to treatment you want, or “no” to treatment you do not want.

English/ Español:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/ABOUT/Pages/ADAC-Forms.aspx>

What are the different types of Advance Care Planning tools?

Living Wills - A living will document allows you to leave written instructions about the kinds of medical treatment you would or would not want to have in the event you ever become mentally or physically unable to choose or communicate your wishes.

Medical Power of Attorney - A medical power of attorney allows you to appoint a health care surrogate decision-maker who is legally bound to execute a patient’s wishes if the patient is unable to communicate for them self. It is very important to let someone know you have picked him or her to be your surrogate decision-maker. This will allow them to make decisions that reflect your wishes.

POLST – A Portable Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) form is a document that you may use to turn your wishes for treatment near the end of life into medical orders. A POLST form is for a person with a serious progressive illness or someone who may not want all available medical treatments. A POLST is not a substitute for an Advance Directive.

Comparing Advance Directives and POLST

	Advance Directive	POLST
What is it?	Legal Document	Medical Order
Who should have this document?	All adults	Anyone who is seriously ill or frail
Why would I need this?	• To tell others who you want to make medical decisions for you if you can't communicate • Tell others what medical treatments you would want, your values, what you care about	• Order providers to give specific treatments during an emergency • Supports the patient across care settings
Who fills it out?	The individual	Health care professional after discussion with patient
Can I use it to appoint my surrogate?	Yes	No
Can emergency responders use it?	No	Yes—It tells them if the patient wants CPR and if the patient wants to go to the hospital.
Is the document easily found?	Not always. Be sure you give a copy of your advance directive to your provider and surrogate at each facility.	Yes. You have a copy, your provider has a copy, and it may also be in a registry.

<https://polst.org/advance-directives/>