

What Matters* Most: Your Life, Your Choices (Advance Planning)

- Get information about your healthcare and life choice options.
- Talk with your healthcare provider about important treatment decisions.
- Talk with your family, friends, loved ones about your choices.
- Identify Durable Power of Attorney for healthcare and finances.
- Make sure your healthcare provider(s) have written copies of the documents in their records.

Green Flags — All Clear

What this means ...



If You:

- Talked about your health choices with healthcare provider, family, friends, and loved ones.
- Communicated your choices and completed *Health Care Advance Directives*.

- Good work!
- Review and modify regularly.

Yellow Flags — Consider

What this means ...



If You:

- Thought about healthcare choices but did not complete any paperwork.
- Have an ongoing health problem and have not decided what treatment options you want.

Consider filling out *advance care planning* paperwork to record your choices and wishes.

- Talk with your healthcare provider.
- Talk with a trusted family or friend about your choices, decisions on healthcare treatment.

Red Flags — Stop and Think

What this means ...



If You:

- Have ongoing or new health condition(s) and a decline in your overall health.
- Have a serious illness.
- Do not have healthcare wishes in writing - no Advance Plan

If you cannot speak for yourself, who will decide?

Seek assistance and support to have the important advance planning decisions in writing.

What Matters* Most: Your Life, Your Choices (Advance Planning)

What matters most is about understanding and communicating healthcare goals and care preferences. This is important for all healthcare decisions, but not limited to, end of life choices. “Advance Care Planning” is about making care planning decisions before an accident or a serious/terminal illness. Though important for all adults 18 years and older, it is especially important for older adults. **It is thinking ahead:**

- What type of treatment do I want or do not want?
- How do I want to be treated?
- What do I want my loved ones to know about my wishes?
- How comfortable do I want to be?

It is important to have your wishes, goals, and medical treatment choices in writing **AND** your healthcare providers should have copies of the documents for their records. Your choices should be reviewed regularly. The following guidelines for reviewing your advance care planning decisions documents:

- At least every 10 years
- If you experience a death of a family or friend, if they are listed as your decision maker
- If you go through a divorce
- If/when you receive a new health diagnosis, new health concern, or ongoing health issue
- If/when you have a decline in your health condition.

Type of Document	What It Is Used For
Health Care Advance Directives	Describes your health care choices and/or allows people know who can make medical decisions for you, if you cannot make them for yourself.
Durable Power of Attorney	A type of healthcare directive that remains in effect if you become unable to make your own decisions.
Living Will	A document you fill out expressing your medical treatment preference during a serious or terminal illness, or if you are permanently unconscious.
Medical Power of Attorney	A document where you name a person of your choice to make medical decisions for you if you cannot make them for yourself.
Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)	A medical order written by a doctor that orders health care providers to not start cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) if your breathing stops or your heart stops beating. It does not cover things like pain medicine, other medicine, or nutrition.
Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST)	Provides detailed information about your medical choices and medical interventions, such as use of antibiotics and feeding tubes. It serves as a treatment order for health professionals in case of an emergency.
Organ and Tissue donations	A document that directs what organs or body parts can be legally used after your death.

**Becoming an Age-Friendly Health System provides a set of four evidence-based elements of high-quality care, known as the “4Ms,” to all older adults. The 4Ms represent a broad shift by health systems to focus on the needs of older adults. The 4 M’s are Medications, Mentation, Mobility, and What Matters.*

What Can You Do? Become informed! To learn more about Advance Planning, visit: fivewishes.org/docs/default-source/resources/talking-about-your-wishes.pdf.

Putting your wishes and choices in writing is a gift you not only give to yourself, but to your loved ones as well.

Aging and Disability Services

Aging and Disability Services (ADS)—the Area Agency on Aging for King County— plans, coordinates, and advocates for comprehensive services for older adults, family caregivers, and people with disabilities in Seattle and King County.

For more information, call 1-844-348-5464 or e-mail info@communitylivingconnections.org



Aging and Disability Services
700 Fifth Avenue, 51st Floor • PO Box 34215
Seattle, WA 98124-4215
Tel: 206-684-0660 • TTY: 206-684-0702
aginginfo@seattle.gov

www.agingkingcounty.org