

Making Your Personal Healthcare Choices Known

Do you have someone who will speak for you if you are unable? It is important that you choose someone you trust who will be willing to speak for you, and make your healthcare decisions known if you can't speak for yourself.

If you have not named someone, state laws will determine who is allowed to make such decisions for you.

Be Proactive about Your Decisions:

1. Have a Conversation.

Talk with a trusted family member or friends about your wishes and ask if he/she will be your health care surrogate (the person you assign to speak for you if you are unable).

2. Put it in Writing.

Complete a living will or other advance directive to make sure your preferences are known. Make sure your surrogate has a copy of your documents and that you and/or your health care surrogate can easily access these documents anytime.

Important Things to Discuss:

- ▶ Treatments you would want if you had a serious condition or critical injury
- ▶ Health care decisions you would make related to your end-of-life care, including life prolonging procedures, how you want to be cared for, who could help and where you would want to stay if you needed care

Helpful Resources:

▶ Sarasota Memorial "Making Your Personal Healthcare Decisions Known"

Find it on smh.com on the Hospital Guide page under "Advance Directives and Living Wills" or ask a member of your healthcare team.

- ▶ Talk with someone who is familiar with your medical history such as your physician or other healthcare provider.

- ▶ The Conversation Project can be located at the following internet address:

theconversationproject.org -- visit this site for a helpful online guide to having this important conversation and putting your wishes in writing.