**Advance Care Planning **

## My Health Care Agent

**Who can be my Health Care Agent?**

Anyone who is at least 18 years old and of sound mind, but is:

* NOT your doctor or other health care provider
* NOT an employee of your health care provider
* NOT an employee of a health care facility where you are a resident or patient
* NOT a spouse/domestic partner of any of the above unless that person is also your relative

**Can I choose someone other than a family member to be my Health Care Agent?**

Yes. Your Health Care Agent does not need to be related to you. They should know you very well and understand your wishes for health care, including your values and what is most important to you. You should be able to trust that they will speak for you if you cannot, and that they will make decisions you would make, even if they don’t agree with them.

**Can I change my mind?**

Yes. If your wishes change or if you change your mind about who you want your Health Care Agent to be, just fill out a new form and get copies of the new form to your loved ones and your doctor. Talk to them about how your wishes have changed.

**Will I lose my ability to make my own decisions by appointing a Health Care Agent?**

Advance Directives are only used if you cannot safely communicate your health care wishes. If you are able to communicate what you want, then that is the only thing that matters.

**If I have several children can I appoint all of them as my Health Care Agent?**

We suggest that only one person should be listed as your Health Care Agent. This way there is less of a possibility for disagreement or confusion among your loved ones. In addition, we suggest you have at least one Alternate Agent in case your Agent is unable or unwilling to take on that role, if the time comes. You can have multiple Alternate Agents (first alternate, second alternate, etc.) listed in the order you prefer on your document.

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All of the Health Care Agents listed on your document should know and understand your wishes and should be willing to take on the role. Some people, even our children, don’t want to be Agents. It is a role that can be very stressful and people have the ability to say no.