

Gastroenterology Associates

Gastroenterology and Hepatology

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ADVANCE DIRECTIVES INFORMATION

The term 'Advance Directives' refers to your verbal and written instructions about your future medical care in the event you become unable to express your medical wishes. There are two types of advance directives: a *health care directive* (living will) and a *durable power of attorney for health care*.

Health Care Directive (Living Will):

A health care directive or "living will" is a simple way to put your wishes about what medical care you want to receive or don't want to receive in writing to be used in the event that you are unable to speak for yourself. In Washington State, the directive is used only if you have a terminal condition where life-sustaining treatment would only artificially prolong the process of dying; or if you are in an irreversible coma and there is no reasonable hope for recovery.

Durable Power of Attorney:

A durable power of attorney for health care is a legal paper in which you name a person to make your health care decisions if a physician determines you cannot make those decisions yourself. The person you name as your Durable Power of Attorney can speak on your behalf anytime you are unable to make your own medical decisions, not only at the end of your life.

Advance directives are the best possible way to make sure that decisions about your future medical care will reflect your own wishes in the event that you are unable to speak for yourself. Having both a living will and a durable power of attorney for health care will provide the best protection for your treatment wishes.

Signed copies of the completed directives should be included in your medical record, given to any person to whom you give your durable power of attorney and to your personal attorney. Originals should be in a safe, but accessible place (not a safe deposit box).

Advance Directive forms are available upon request or can be downloaded from the WA State Medical Association website which also contains further information and answers to frequently asked questions at www.wsma.org.

Completing an advance directive is completely voluntary. If you do not want an advance directive, you do not need to complete the forms.

Gastroenterology Associates Endoscopy Center (GAEC) Advance Directives Policy

Life-sustaining efforts will be initiated and maintained on all patients who may have a cardiac/respiratory event while at GAEC.

If available, copies of any advance directives will accompany the patient being transferred to another facility.