



About Honoring Choices® Virginia

Have you wondered how to talk to your loved ones about what medical care you would or wouldn't want in a medical crisis?

Are you a health care provider who wants to have these conversations with your patients, but aren't sure where to begin?

We're here to help.



We serve Greater Richmond. With more than 45 clinical sites, numerous community partners, and over 200 trained advance care planning facilitators, we are here to help you and your loved ones with your future medical decision-making.



We offer training + programs. We provide facilitator and instructor training for medical and community organizations, as well as interested individuals from across the Commonwealth. We also offer community educational programming for groups.



We work collaboratively. Honoring Choices® Virginia is a collaborative of the Richmond Academy of Medicine and our local health systems. Join us! Our partners assist individuals and their loved ones in having important conversations about future medical decisions.



Let's Make a Plan. Together.

Advance care planning is a process of thinking about and sharing your wishes for future medical care. It can help you tell others what would be important to you if you were too sick to communicate. **We're here to help.**

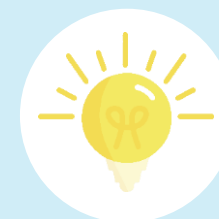
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OUR PARTNERS



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Think



Talk



Plan

Advance Care Planning in 3 Steps

Often we know more about what we don't want than what we want. Our process of planning lets you explore what's meaningful to you so that you can get the care you want in a medical crisis. **No more and no less than you desire.**

Ready to get started? We can help!

Honoring Choices® Virginia's network of advance care planning facilitators can help you with this important process of planning. Visit www.honoringchoices-va.org for connections and resources.



Step 1: Think

Explore past experiences, future goals, and what “living well” means to you. Identify a decision maker or “agent” who can honor your decisions.

Think about past experiences you or a loved one has had with medical care:

- What did you like? What did you not like?
- What does a good day include?
- Is it more important to you to have more days or more life in your days?
- What is your current health status? How does this influence what type of care you would or would not want?

Who will speak for you if you aren't able to communicate?

A medical decision maker, or “health care agent”, is a person who can make health care decisions for you if you are too sick to make them yourself. This should be someone who:

- You can talk to about your wishes
- You trust to follow your wishes even if they don't agree with them
- Will be able to understand your medical information
- You know will ask questions and speak up to doctors and family members



Step 2: Talk

Share what's important to you with those you love.

Ask your medical decision maker

Start by asking if this person can serve in this role. Listen to their thoughts and answer any questions. Share information regarding the responsibilities this person is taking on.

Share your plans with your support network

Make sure your support network, those who would care for you in a medical crisis, are aware of your goals. Some conversation starters might include:

“My health is good right now, but I want to talk to you about what I'd want if I was sick and needed you to make decisions for me.”

“My doctor wants me to think about my future care and to make an advance care plan. Will you help me?”

“That story about the family fighting about their mom's care made me realize that we should talk about these things so the same thing doesn't happen to our family.”

Source: Speak Up, <http://www.advancecareplanning.ca/resource/conversation-starters/>



Step 3: Plan

Communicate your goals, revisit your directive regularly, and encourage your friends and family to have the conversation.

Put your wishes into writing

Completing an advance medical directive lets your family, friends and doctors know your wishes about your health care if you become very sick and unable to speak for yourself. An advance medical directive typically has three parts:

1. Name your medical decision maker
2. Make health care choices for certain situations
3. Sign the form to make it valid and have it witnessed by two adults

You can complete an advance medical directive on your own, work with an attorney or health care provider, or collaborate with a certified advance care planning facilitator.

Make your document accessible

Crises rarely happen during banking hours, so instead of storing your directive in a safety deposit box, keep it in a place that is accessible at any time. Always bring a copy to surgical appointments and provide a copy of your advance medical directive to:

- Your medical decision maker
- Your loved ones
- Your primary care physician
- Any specialists involved in your care
- Your attorney
- Your hospital of choice

You can also upload your directive to the Virginia Advance Directive Registry: connectvirginia.org/adr

Finally, your advance medical directive should be a living document!

Revisit your decisions often – at least once every decade, after a new diagnosis, following the death of a loved one, in the event of a marriage or divorce, and if you've experienced a change in your health.



What if you choose not to have an advance directive?

Without an advance directive, your family physician, hospital, and in some cases a judge, would need to make decisions regarding your future care.