

## Other information about Advance Care Planning in South Carolina:

- The Health Care Power of Attorney and Living Will are not the same as a durable power of attorney or your will. Consult your attorney or the SC Bar to make sure you have completed the necessary documents.
- As part of your care, your physician may write orders including Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) and Do Not Intubate (DNI) consistent with your desires and wishes.
- The EMS-DNR (Emergency Medical Services Non-Resuscitation Order) is a document obtained from and signed by your physician, at your request, which prohibits emergency personnel from employing resuscitative measures if you are terminally ill.
- Federal law requires hospitals and other health care facilities to inform patients about advance directives and to request a copy on admission. You are not required to have an advance directive to be admitted to a hospital or health care facility.
- If you already have an advance directive, be sure to bring it with you anytime you are admitted to a hospital or other health care facility
- If you sign a Living Will while you are in a hospital or other health care facility, a representative from the state (an ombudsman) must witness your signature on the document.

Your wishes about organ and tissue donation are important in the advance care planning process. For more information or to become a donor, register online at [www.donatelifesc.org](http://www.donatelifesc.org), at [SCDMVonline.com](http://SCDMVonline.com) or at any SC Department of Motor Vehicles office.

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## For More Information

- Download/print the companion *Frequently Asked Questions* document at the site where you found this brochure.
- An *“Isn’t It Time We Talk”* Planning Guide is available at a minimal cost from The Carolinas Center for Hospice and End of Life Care. This workbook includes copies of the Living Will and Health Care Power of Attorney and is designed to help individuals and families discuss and plan for health care before there is a medical crisis. Information about this Guide can be found at [www.carolinasendoflifecare.org](http://www.carolinasendoflifecare.org) or by calling (803) 791-4220.

This brochure is the result of a collaboration between



The Carolinas Center for Hospice and End of Life Care  
[www.carolinasendoflifecare.org](http://www.carolinasendoflifecare.org) | 803.791.4220



The South Carolina Bar  
[www.scbar.org](http://www.scbar.org) | 803.799.6653



The South Carolina Hospital Association  
[www.scha.org](http://www.scha.org) | 803.796.3080

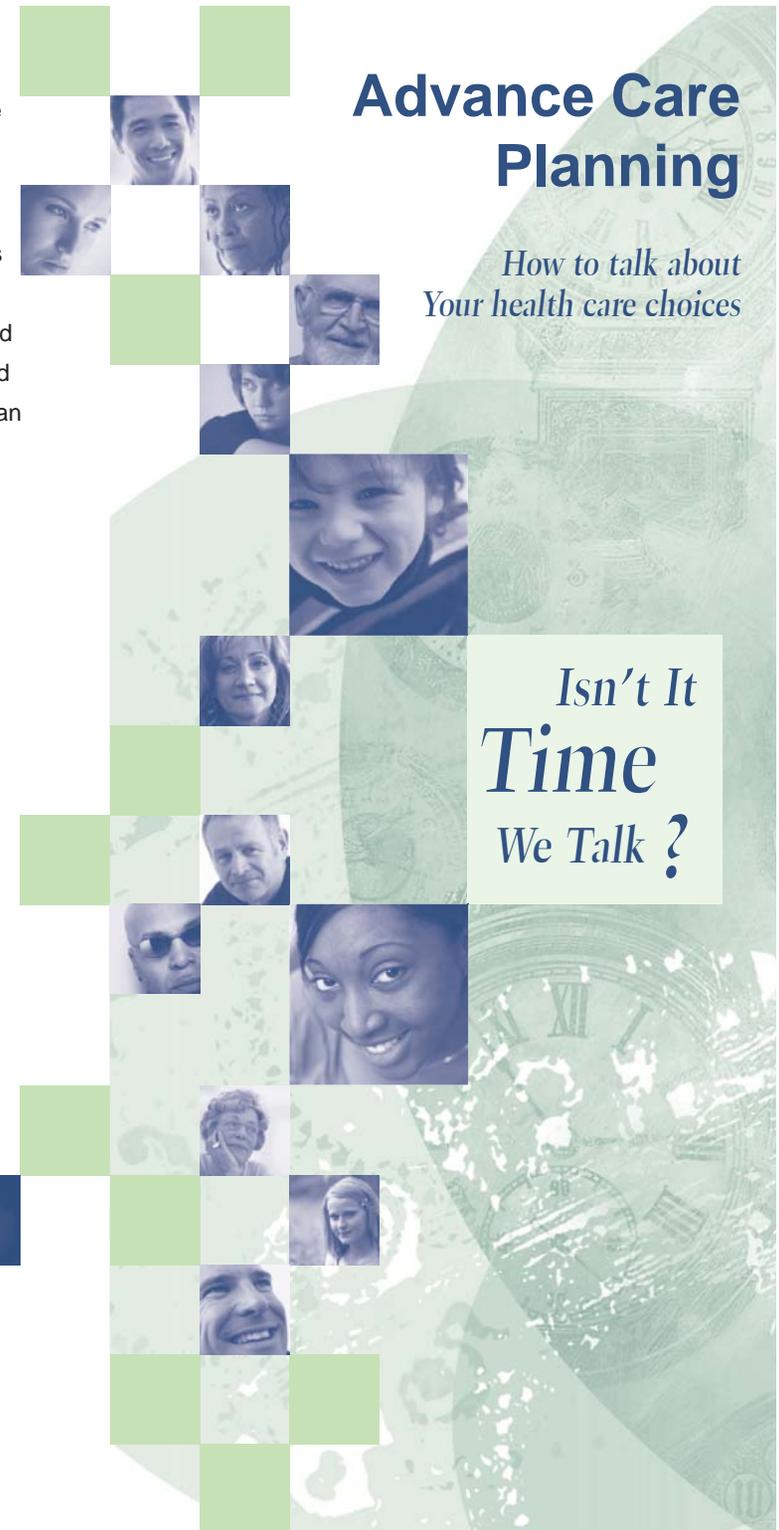


The South Carolina Medical Association  
[www.scmanet.org](http://www.scmanet.org) | 1.800.327.1021

# Advance Care Planning

*How to talk about Your health care choices*

*Isn't It Time We Talk ?*



As an adult, you make decisions every day, from very simple to more complex choices about your home, your career and your life. You plan ahead for a special vacation, a birth or a wedding, a trip to the grocery store.

An important choice that you might not have thought about is your choice for health care in the future. Technology and medical advances have given us more and more choices.

How would you like to be treated if you are seriously ill? Decisions like these are best made before there is a health crisis.

Advance Care Planning includes:

- Understanding possible future health care decisions
- Thinking about choices in light of what is important to you
- Talking with your loved ones and health care providers
- Putting your plans in writing

Planning ahead for this choice—now, while you are able—is a gift you can give to yourself and those you love. Having a plan will make it easier for you, your doctor and your loved ones if decisions about treatment ever need to be made at a time when you are unable to do so.

## Understand possible future health choices

- Look at your health now, understanding that a change in your health can occur at any time.
- Learn about the options for care that are available in your area. Talk with your doctor, faith leader, legal advisor and loved ones.
- Health care choices may include decisions about specific treatments for an illness or condition; whether to have care at home by family and friends or professionals such as home health or hospice care, care in an assisted living or long term care facility; and decisions about organ and tissue donation.

## Consider choices in light of what is important to you.

- Think about what you value most about your life. Consider questions like: What brings joy and meaning to your life? What does it mean for you to “live well?”
- Your current health and well-being can affect your future care decisions. What worries, if any, do you have about your health now? What would you want if your life changed due to illness or injury?
- Who would you want to make medical decisions for you, if you could not make them?

## Talk about your decisions with loved ones and your doctors

- Conversations with those you love and care for you are important as you make decisions about your health care. Decisions should be based on your wishes and values, but they need not be made alone.
- To start the conversation with loved ones, use a book or movie as a chance to bring up the subject. Or refer to a situation that your family will know, like the experience of a friend or a famous person.
- Take time during visits with your doctor or other health care professional to discuss your wishes.

## Put your plans in writing so they will be ready if they are needed

Complete legal documents called “advance directives” to make your decisions known.

These documents allow you to express your values and wishes and to designate someone you trust to make decisions for you when you cannot.

## SC law provides for several documents:

- **Health Care Power of Attorney:** Allows you to designate someone to make any health care decisions for you when you are temporarily or permanently unable to do so.
- **Living Will (Declaration of a Desire for Natural Death):** Allows you to express your choices about your care ONLY if you are terminally ill or permanently unconscious.
- **Five Wishes:** Allows you to communicate your wishes to family, friends and health care providers including your choice to receive or decline specific treatments, what you want loved ones to know, and who you want to designate to make sure your wishes are followed.
- The Health Care Power of Attorney and Living Will are available at no cost from a variety of organizations including the ones listed on the back of this brochure. The Five Wishes document is available for a minimal cost per copy at [www.agingwithdignity.org/five-wishes](http://www.agingwithdignity.org/five-wishes) or at 888-594-7437.

*You can always change your mind, even after putting your wishes in writing. You may want to review your plans from time to time to be sure they still express your wishes.*

**Advance care planning takes time.**

**By reading this, you have already started the process. Talking to others about your choices for care at the end of life is the most important step.**

**As you share your plans, you are sharing a gift that will help your loved ones and health care providers give you the care you want.**