Isn’t It Time We Talk?

Advance Care Planning

How to talk about your health care choices

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 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 | 803.791.4220

The South Carolina Bar
www.scbar.org | 803.799.6653

The South Carolina Hospital Association
www.scha.org | 803.796.3080

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, at SCDMVonline.com or at any SC Department of Motor Vehicles office.

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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.

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 or at 888-594-7437.

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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.