

Advance Health Care Directive

What is an Advance Health Care Directive (AHCD)?

An AHCD is a written statement of your health care wishes. It is used in the event of an illness or injury that leaves you unable to communicate your health care wishes to others. You can make an AHCD if you are 16 years of age or over.

Who Should Make An AHCD?

A person who has been diagnosed with a disabling or serious illness should make an AHCD. But since anyone could experience an accident or a sudden illness and need some form of life-support, an AHCD would benefit everyone.

What Happens in Case of a Medical Emergency?

In a medical emergency, a nurse or doctor does not have to look for your AHCD before giving treatment. However, if they are made aware of your AHCD when you enter the emergency room, then your AHCD must be followed.

Your AHCD has four parts:

1. A written statement of your health care wishes/instructions
2. Your signature
3. At least two witnesses
4. A substitute decision maker

A substitute decision maker is a person who will communicate your health care decisions for you. This person must be 19 years of age or over. You should choose someone you trust as your substitute decision maker.

Western Health's Policy

You may request a copy of Western Health's policy #6-04-40 Advance Health Care Directives (AHCD).

Resources

- *It's Your Decision: How to Make an Advance Health Care Directive* – available from your nurse or pastoral care services
- www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/a04-1.htm

For Further Information

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