

Advance Health Care Directive Check List

- Get an Advance Health Care Directive form recognized in your state.
- Talk to your doctor, family, friends, and others who are important to you about your health care wishes, beliefs, and values.
- Complete the Advance Health Care Directive form.
- Have the Advance Health Care Directive notarized or witnessed.
- Give a copy of the completed Advance Health Care Directive to your agent(s), doctor(s), clergy, family, friends, and anyone you feel that should be informed about your wishes concerning medical treatment.

For more information, contact the Care
Coordination Social Work department:

Phone: 323-865-3150

Fax: 323-865-0049

Keck Medical Center of USC is committed to providing the best possible care experience for our patients and their loved ones. We respect and honor our patients' wishes with regard to their medical treatment.

We strive to ensure that these wishes are carried out if a patient should be unable to communicate directly with their health care team.

Keck Medicine of **USC**

Keck Hospital of USC

**USC Norris
Comprehensive Cancer Center**

Keck Medicine of **USC**

***Let
Others
Know
Your
Choice***

**Advance
Health Care
Directives**

What is an Advance Health Care Directive?

A legal document that lets your doctor, family, friends, and others who are important to you know your health care wishes when you are unable to speak for yourself.

It allows you to have another adult over the age of 18, known as an “agent,” make health care choices for you when you are no longer able to make them for yourself.

Why is it important to have an Advance Health Care Directive?

- **To protect your health care wishes, beliefs, and values under federal and state law.**
- **To help medical care givers create an appropriate health care plan based on your wishes stated in your advance health care directive.**
- **To assist family, loved ones, and others who are important to you understand your health care wishes.**

Who can complete an Advance Health Care Directive?

Anyone at least 18 years old (or an emancipated minor), who is of sound mind, and acting on his or her own free will can complete a valid advance health care directive.

When should someone complete an Advance Health Care Directive?

Before an emergency occurs. Adults over the age of 18 should complete an advance health care directive as soon as possible.

Who can I appoint as my health care agent?

Almost any adult over the age of 18 can be appointed as your agent. An agent can be a family member, your spouse, a same-sex or domestic partner, an adult child, a friend, or someone you trust.

You should also have one or more “alternate agents.” An alternate agent is a person you can choose as your health care agent if your original health care agent is unavailable or unwilling to make a decision for you.

Where can I get an Advance Health Care Directive?

Forms are available upon request at Keck Medical Center of USC. Talk to your doctor, nurse, or contact the Care Coordination Social Work department. Or, go to: State of California Office of the Attorney General - oag.ca.gov/consumers/general/care#advance.

Is there only one type of Advance Health Care Directive form?

Advance Health Care Directive forms are specific to the State in which you live. An Advance Health Care Directive legally approved in the State of California may or may not be honored in other States. Most States recognize an Advance Health Care Directive legally approved in another State. If you spend a lot of time in a State outside of California, talk to a doctor, lawyer, or a medical professional in that State.

How do I legalize my Advance Health Care Directive?

To legalize your Advance Health Care Directive, your signature must be observed and signed by either a notary of the public or by two adult witnesses over the age of 18.

There are limitations on whom you can choose to be your witnesses.

Individuals **not** eligible as witnesses include:

- **Your health care provider or an employee of your health care provider.**
- **The operator or an employee of a community care facility.**
- **The operator or an employee of a residential care facility for the elderly.**
- **The person you have appointed as an agent, if you have appointed an agent.**

In addition, one of your witnesses must be unrelated to you by blood, marriage, or adoption and not entitled to any portion of your estate.

Who should receive a copy of my Advance Health Care Directive?

It is recommended that you give a copy of the completed form to your agent(s), doctor(s), clergy, family, friends, and anyone you feel should be informed about your wishes concerning medical treatment.