

Letting Your Choices be Known

We encourage you to consider completing an advance directive to ensure your wishes regarding your care at end-of-life are known to your loved ones and your healthcare team.

At Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey we will honor a valid advance directive under New Jersey state law.

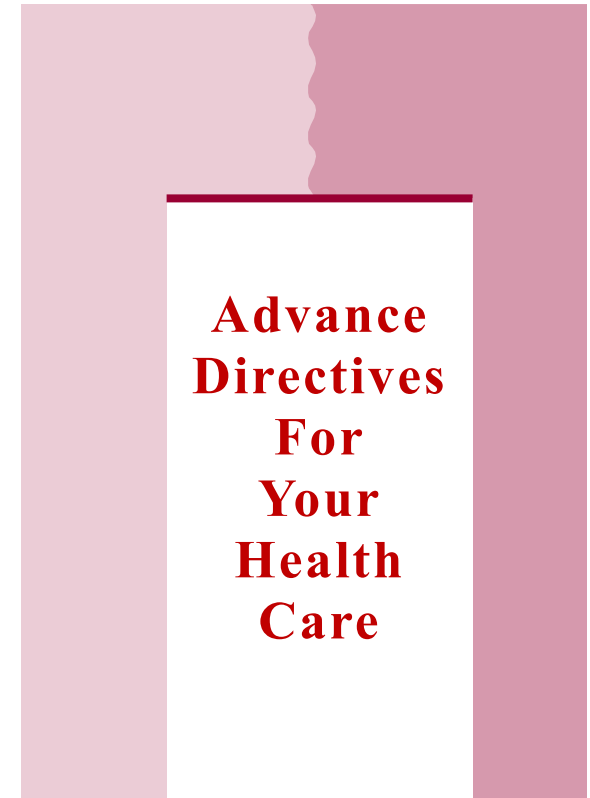
WANT TO KNOW MORE?

To learn more, call Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey Social Work Department at 732-235-6792

We will be able to give you information about advance directives and help you fill out a form. You are also encouraged to visit the Resource and Learning Center (room 2500) for more information.

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Because we all have the right
to make our own choices...

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Advance Directives

WHAT IS AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?

An advance directive is a legal form that allows you to state your wishes about your future health care, especially your end-of-life wishes. This will ensure your decisions are carried out should you be unable to communicate them to your doctor. An advance directive also lets you choose someone, a proxy, who will see your wishes are followed.

WHO IS ABLE TO FILL OUT AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE FOR HEALTH CARE?

In New Jersey, any person who is 18 years or older and who is able to make decisions can fill out an advance directive. It is recommended, in fact, that all adults have an advance directive regardless of their health status.

DO I NEED A LAWYER TO FILL OUT AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?

No, in the state of New Jersey you do not need a lawyer to fill out an advanced directive. You need two adults to witness your signature for it to become legal; they cannot be your proxy (healthcare representative). Also, some advance directive forms may be notarized to make them legal.



Think about what you would want.
Write it down.
Share with others.
Include it in your medical record.

WHAT TYPES OF ADVANCE DIRECTIVES MAY I USE?

There are three types of advance directives: a proxy directive, an instruction directive, and a combined directive.

A **proxy directive** (also called a healthcare proxy or durable power of attorney for health care) lets you name a person, called your “proxy”, to make health care decisions for you if you cannot make choices for yourself. This is your healthcare representative.

You should choose person as proxy who is willing and able to follow your wishes and be your voice. Your proxy must know your beliefs and be willing to make the decisions you would want. It is a good idea to name two people, just in case the first person is not available.

An **instruction directive** (also called a living will) is a written statement about what kinds of treatment you accept or refuse in certain situations.

A **combined directive** is both a proxy directive and an instruction directive. This directive allows you to name a health care representative and write your healthcare wishes.

IS MY PROXY ABLE TO MAKE DECISIONS IF I AM STILL ABLE TO MAKE MY OWN?

No, your healthcare representative is only allowed to make decisions for you if your physician evaluates you and determines you are unable to understand your diagnosis or the possible benefits and harms of the treatment options.

WHO SHOULD I TALK TO ABOUT MY ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?

You should talk to your family, your doctors, and others who are close to you. Every time you go to the hospital or a medical facility bring your most recent advance directive with you.

AM I ABLE TO MAKE CHANGES TO MY ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?

Yes, you always have the ability to make changes by filling out a new advance directive form. You must make sure your proxy (health care representative), family and health care team always have the most recent form.

HOW DO I FILL OUT AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?

There are several places to find valid advance directive forms online, including:

www.caringinfo.org
www.nj.gov/health/advancedirective/ad/forums

Your Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey social worker is also able to give you a form and help you fill one out. You can ask a staff member to call your social worker, or call the main number for the social work department at 732-235-6792.

IS AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE ENOUGH?

There are times of serious illness when a physician order is needed to ensure certain wishes will be followed. Please ask your doctor or advance practice professional about a P.O.L.S.T. (Practitioner Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment) form.