Advance Care Planning FAQ’S

What is Advance Care Planning? Advance care planning is making decisions about the healthcare you would want to receive if you happen to become unable to speak for yourself. These are your decisions to make, regardless of what you choose for your care, and the decisions are based on your personal values, preferences, and discussions with your loved ones.

What is an Advance Directive? An Advance Directive is a legal document that enables you to plan for and communicate your end-of-life wishes in the event that you are unable to speak for yourself. With an advance directive, you can express how much or how little you want done for you when you are no longer able to make these decisions.

What happens if I do not have an Advance Directive? You will receive medical care regardless of whether or not you have an advance directive. If you cannot speak for yourself and do not have an advance directive, a physician will generally look to your family, friends, or clergy for decisions about your care. If the medical center is unable to locate any family to act on your behalf, they may ask the courts to appoint a person (a guardian) who will make decisions for you.

How do I choose my healthcare agent (spokesperson, proxy etc.)? Think about people you know who share your views and values about life and medical decisions. Your healthcare agent might be a family member, a friend, your lawyer or someone in your social or spiritual community. It’s a good idea to also name an alternate healthcare agent.

Do I need a lawyer to complete an Advance Directive? No, you can complete an Advance Directive on your own.

Do I need a witness when I sign my Advance Directive? You can choose to have your Advance Directive notarized, in which case you would not need additional witnesses. Or, you can choose to sign and date your Advance Directive in front of two adult witnesses who must also sign and date the document.
Is there anyone who cannot sign my Advance Directive as a witness? Yes, the person who you appoint as your healthcare representative cannot be a witness.

Can my Advance Care Directive form be changed? You can change your Advance Directive any time you want by completing a new one. Once updated, copies of the signed and updated Advance Directive should be shared with your healthcare agent, healthcare providers, attorney, family, friends or anyone who has a copy.

How do I get started?

- If you have additional questions, you can reach out to your care manager or primary care provider.

What should I do with my completed Advance Directive Form? Once completed, copies of the Advance Directive should be shared with your healthcare agent, healthcare providers, attorney, family, friends and anyone you wish to have a copy.

How do I earn the $150 wellness credit for having an Advance Directive? At your Annual Preventive Care Visit with your primary care provider, your provider will have the opportunity to indicate whether or not you have an Advance Directive on file by checking the “Advance Directive Form Complete” box on your Wellness Activity Certification Form. Please bring a copy of your completed Advanced Directive with you to this visit.