



# YOUR HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVE

Planning ahead now can help you take charge of your health care in the future

Creating a health care directive allows you to state your wishes for your medical care if you become very sick or seriously injured and cannot speak for yourself.

## WHAT IS A HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVE?

A health care directive is a written, legal document that states the kind of medical care you want, and who can make decisions about your care if you cannot speak for yourself.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Serious illness or injury can happen any time. Without a health care directive, your family and health care providers may not know your wishes. But if you have a health care directive, the people who care for you will know what kind of medical treatment you want.

## IS A HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVE REQUIRED BY LAW?

No. Your health care providers will still treat you. But in the event you aren't able to make decisions about your care, your health care provider will ask your family members to make decisions for you.



### DID YOU KNOW?

You can ask your doctor or care coordinator for a health care directive form, or call the Senior LinkAge Line® at **1-800-333-2433** to have one mailed to you.

You can find additional information online at:

[bluecrossmn.com/caregiver](http://bluecrossmn.com/caregiver)

[www.caringinfo.org](http://www.caringinfo.org)

[www.agingwithdignity.org](http://www.agingwithdignity.org)

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Think about the medical treatments you would and wouldn't want for yourself
- Consider your values, cultural traditions, and spiritual beliefs
- Think about who you would want to make health care decisions for you (this person is called your health care agent)
- Discuss your health care wishes with your family members, primary care physician, care coordinator or health care agent

## TAKE CHARGE

- Get a health care directive form that meets Minnesota state legal requirements to guide you through the process and serve as your legal health directive
- Share copies with your family, health care agent, and primary care physician
- Review your health care directive annually. Notify your family, health care agent, and primary care physician of any updates you make.

