

EMPATH  
CHOICES  
FOR CARE



# It's Your Life – Your Terms

***“Making Health Care  
Decisions With a  
Serious Illness”***

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Advance Care Planning Facilitator & Instructor

# Objectives

- Define advance care planning and discuss the importance
- Explore value-based decision making
- Discuss how to give your decisions a voice
- Describe strategies for getting your wishes honored

# Advance Care Planning is a Process

*Understanding,  
Reflection &  
Discussion*



# It's about...

- **Learning** about options
- **Thinking** about values
- **Talking** about decisions
- **Documenting** wishes
- **Sharing** them with others

# Advance Care Planning is:

- is not a “one size fits all” discussion
  - Readiness
  - Goals for care
  - Values, spirituality & cultural beliefs

# Terms

## Advance Directive

- instructions , written or discussed in advance, concerning any aspect of a person's healthcare. Includes: living will, designation of healthcare surrogate, organ/tissue donation, preplanned funeral arrangements, etc.

## Living Will

- a legal document used to designate a person's medical decisions concerning life-prolonging procedures

## Last Will & Testament

- a legal document to designate how a person's estate (assets) will be distributed

# Terms

## Healthcare Surrogate

- a trusted person designated by an individual to make medical decisions upon incapacity

## Healthcare Proxy

- an adult who has not been expressly designated but is authorized to make health care decisions (absence of HCS)

# Terms

## Durable Power of Attorney

- *Durable*, meaning it is not affected if a person becomes incapacitated and it lasts until the death of the person who gave it
- Only for financial unless medical is specifically spelled out in DPOA
- FL has HCS, some states have DPOA /Healthcare



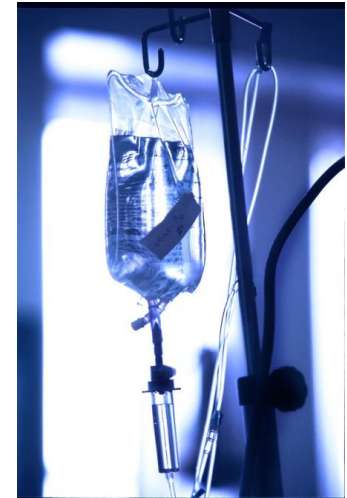
# What decisions are we talking about?

1. Choosing a health care surrogate
2. Medical decisions about life-prolonging procedures
  - Any medical procedure, treatment, or intervention which sustains or restores a vital function
  - Does not include medication or medical procedure that provides comfort or alleviates pain

# Learning About Options

## Make informed treatment decisions

- CPR
- Breathing Machines
- Antibiotics
- Dialysis
- Tube Feeding



# Your Choice



It's not just about  
what you don't  
want...it's  
about what  
you do want.

# Thinking About Values

- No one can define quality of life but you
- What qualities in life are valued?
  - ✓ Family
  - ✓ Independence
  - ✓ Spirituality
  - ✓ Mobility
  - ✓ Mental capacity
- What are the short & long-term goals?

# Choosing a Health Care Surrogate

- The most important part of the advance care planning process.



# What makes a Good HCS?

- Able
- Willing
- Local, preferably
- Not intimidated by hospital or physicians
- Will follow your wishes, *even if they disagree*
- Able to ask questions and make decisions
- Is aware of your wishes and values, because you have discussed them
- A strong advocate



# What does the surrogate do?

- Makes healthcare treatment decisions
- Takes steps to see that wishes are honored
- Talks to the doctor/health care team
- Authorizes treatment or has it withdrawn per pt. wishes
- Has access to medical records
- Can authorize transportation to another facility

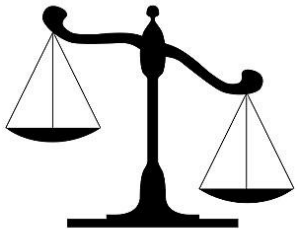
# FACT

**Not making a decision  
IS  
making a decision**



# Florida law will appoint someone to act

- Spouse
  - Adult child(ren)
  - Parent(s)
  - Adult sibling
  - Adult relative
  - Close friend
  - Clinical social worker
- Court Appointed Guardian



# Talking About Decisions

Communicating preferences to:

- Family
- Loved ones
- Health care professionals



# Talk to Your Doctor

- Discuss medical treatments with your doctor. He/she knows your condition, diagnosis, prognosis, etc.
- Good communication is key
- Understanding gray areas
- Be empowered  
*“no decision about me, without me”*



# What should I discuss with my physician?

- Questions to help you better understand your diagnosis, treatment, prognosis
- Benefits / burdens of treatment
- What can you expect to happen?
- Your definition of an acceptable outcome
- Your fears/concerns

# The Living Well Concept

- What activities or experiences are most important for you to live well?
- What fears or worries do you have about your illness or medical care?
- If you have to choose between living longer and quality of life, how would you approach this balance?
- What needs or services would you like to discuss?
- Are there any special events or activities that you are looking forward to?
- What sustains you when you face serious challenges in your life?
- Do you have religious or spiritual beliefs that are important to you?

# Documenting Wishes

## Living Will

- Written instructions for medical treatment
- *ONLY* when you are no longer able to communicate your choices yourself

**LIVING WILL & APPOINTMENT OF HEALTHCARE SURROGATE**

**Part 1: Appointment of a Healthcare Surrogate**

**Part 2: Indicate Your Wishes**

**Part 3: My Specific Choices**

|   | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. I want to be kept on life support if I am unable to breathe on my own. |     |    |
| 2. I want to be kept on a ventilator if I am unable to breathe on my own. |     |    |
| 3. I want to be kept on a feeding tube if I am unable to eat or drink.    |     |    |
| 4. I want to be kept on a catheter if I am unable to urinate.             |     |    |
| 5. I want to be kept on a tracheostomy if I am unable to breathe.         |     |    |
| 6. I want to be kept on a dialysis machine if I am unable to urinate.     |     |    |
| 7. I want to be kept on a respirator if I am unable to breathe.           |     |    |
| 8. I want to be kept on a ventilator if I am unable to breathe.           |     |    |
| 9. I want to be kept on a feeding tube if I am unable to eat or drink.    |     |    |
| 10. I want to be kept on a catheter if I am unable to urinate.            |     |    |
| 11. I want to be kept on a tracheostomy if I am unable to breathe.        |     |    |
| 12. I want to be kept on a dialysis machine if I am unable to urinate.    |     |    |
| 13. I want to be kept on a respirator if I am unable to breathe.          |     |    |
| 14. I want to be kept on a ventilator if I am unable to breathe.          |     |    |
| 15. I want to be kept on a feeding tube if I am unable to eat or drink.   |     |    |
| 16. I want to be kept on a catheter if I am unable to urinate.            |     |    |
| 17. I want to be kept on a tracheostomy if I am unable to breathe.        |     |    |
| 18. I want to be kept on a dialysis machine if I am unable to urinate.    |     |    |
| 19. I want to be kept on a respirator if I am unable to breathe.          |     |    |
| 20. I want to be kept on a ventilator if I am unable to breathe.          |     |    |

# Sharing **Your Decisions**

- Keep original where it can be easily found
- Copies to:
  - Physician (s)
  - Healthcare surrogate
  - Family and caregivers (all children)
  - Hospital medical records
  - Spiritual advisor





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# How often should it be reviewed?

- Remember the 5 Ds
  - a Decade
  - a Divorce
  - a Death
  - a Diagnosis
  - a Decline

# What NOT to Do


- Don't wait to address advance care planning
- Don't assume your health care surrogate knows what you want without discussing it
- Don't choose more than one person as your primary HCS

# The Benefits of Planning in Advance

- Prevents under treatment/over treatment
- Reduces stress of medical decision process on others
- Enhances guidance to surrogate

# Our Services

- Assistance for individuals and families
- Professional training courses
- Community and corporate presentations
- Advance directives – free of charge
- Continuing education courses for healthcare, legal and faith professionals
- Resource library



The purpose of **Empath Choices for Care** is to educate and empower people to communicate and document their health care choices so that their wishes are honored.

## **Expertise, Support & Compassion Every Step of Your Journey**

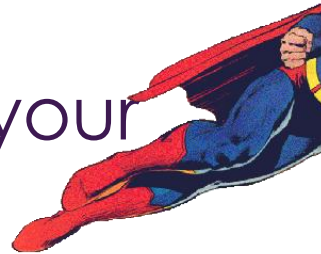
Empath Health is a not-for-profit integrative network of care encompassing hospice, palliative home health and physician services, assistance for independent living and daycare for seniors, services for those infected or affected by HIV/AIDS and advance care planning. Additional programs and services are in development.

### **Empath Health Members Include:**

- Suncoast Hospice
- Suncoast Hospice Foundation
- Suncoast PACE
- Suncoast Solutions
- Empath Home Health
- Empath Choices for Care
- AIDS Service Association of Pinellas (ASAP)
- Suncoast Hospice Institute

# Your 3 Takeaways Today

1. Advance care planning is a process that involves learning, thinking, talking, documenting and sharing.
2. Designating a health care surrogate (your superhero) is key.
3. The conversation is the most important part.



Advance care planning  
is a gift to those you  
love.





# Our contact information

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

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*Thank  
You!*