



Advance Directive

PeaceHealth St. John Medical Center recognizes the intrinsic worth and dignity of each individual and each individual's right to participate in the decisions that affect his/her life and health. St. John Medical Center provides information and assistance to patients and their legally designated decision makers regarding Advance Directives.

During the admission and registration process adult patients age 18 years and older are asked if they have completed an Advance Directive (i.e., Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare, or a Physician Order for Life Sustaining Treatment). Completion of an Advance Directive is voluntary on the patient's part and is never required as a condition of care.

For those patients who report having a completed Advance Directive, but who do not have it with them at the time of admission to the hospital, the patient's wishes are documented in the medical chart, in accordance with Washington state law, until a copy of the completed Advance Directive is provided to the medical center.

Any patient wishing to complete an Advance Directive may do so. If the patient has questions or concern about completing an Advance Directive, or their existing Advance Directive, Ethics or Spiritual Care is called in to assist the patient or their legally designated decision maker in clarifying the documentation of the patient's wishes. PeaceHealth employees and volunteers may not serve as witness for a hospital patient's Advance Directive.

Patients may change or cancel an Advance Directive at any time. Any change or cancellation of an Advance Directive may be communicated verbally or in writing by the patient. Such changes are documented in the patient's medical record and immediately communicated to the physician and the patient's nurse.

Patient wishes expressed in the Advance Directives are honored in accordance with Washington State Law and the Mission and Values of PeaceHealth. It is the responsibility of the patient's physician to notify the patient if the physician is not able, as a matter of conscience, to honor the Advance Directives. The physician is responsible for assisting in the transfer of care of the patient to a physician who can honor the patient's wishes.

Caregivers that, as a matter of conscience, cannot participate in the execution of a patient's Advance Directive are not required to do so. Care of the patient will continue uninterrupted as arrangements are made to transfer care to another caregiver.