

We all value the right to make our own decisions about our medical and mental health care, but there may come a time when we can't understand or express our choices due to an incapacitating accident or illness. Under Federal and State Law, every adult age 18 years or older who is legally competent (does not have a guardian appointed for medical decisions) and "of sound mind" has the right to create an **Advance Directive**. An Advance Directive is a legally binding written document that allows you to make your decisions for care and treatment known in advance to ensure that these will be honored if you are unable to speak for yourself. The decision to create or not create an Advance Directive is entirely voluntary. Your services will not be affected either way.

Under Michigan Law, there are two basic types of Advance Directives:

1. The Michigan Estates and Protected Individual's Code allows you to create an **Advance Directive for Medical and/or for Mental Health Care**. In these documents you designate another trusted individual, called a "**Patient Advocate**," to act as your agent who will be empowered to make care or treatment decisions on your behalf based on your previously stated wishes during a time when you are unable to give informed consent.
 - A **Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care** is a document in which you direct your patient advocate, in writing, to consent or refuse to consent to certain types of **medical care** based on your previously stated wishes. In order for the patient advocate to make these decisions on your behalf, your physician **and** at least one other physician or licensed psychologist must first examine you and determine that you are unable to give informed consent to medical decisions. You have the right to revoke your patient advocate's authority at any time. The patient advocate's authority is also suspended when you are again able to give informed consent.
 - A **Durable Power of Attorney for Mental Health Care** also known as an **Advance Directive for Mental Health Care**, or a **Psychiatric Advance Directive (PAD)**, is a document in which you direct your patient advocate, in writing, to consent or refuse to consent to certain types of **mental health/psychiatric care** based on your previously stated wishes. In order for your patient advocate to make decisions on your behalf, a physician **and** a mental health professional of your choosing (who can be a physician, psychologist, registered nurse or masters-level social worker) must examine you and determine that you are unable to give informed consent to mental health care decisions. You have the right to revoke your patient advocate's authority at any time, unless you have chosen to waive this right in your Advance Directive for Mental Health Care. The patient advocate's authority is also suspended when you are again able to give informed consent.
2. A **Do-Not-Resuscitate Order (DNR)** is a document created under the Michigan Do Not Resuscitate Procedures Act that allows you to direct, in writing, that you will not be resuscitated in the event you stop breathing or your heart stops. A DNR is not legally binding in a hospital, a nursing home, Adult Foster Care Home, or a mental health facility owned or operated by the Department of Community Health.

Even if you don't choose to create an Advance Directive you may want to consider developing a **Crisis Plan**. A Crisis Plan directs what you want to happen if you experience increased symptoms or difficulty managing your life in order to avoid a psychiatric crisis and what you want to happen should you require urgent or emergent care. Your worker will discuss the option of developing a Crisis Plan during your person-centered planning process so that it can be included in your Individual Plan of Services.

If you already have an Advance Directive or choose to create one in the future, we ask that you provide a copy to place in your records at NLCMH so your treating professionals are aware of it.

We encourage you to learn more about Advance Directives and more information is available upon your request, including referral information about other agencies who may be able help you develop an Advance Directive. Contact your Customer Service representative for more information at (231) 876-3246 (Cadillac) or (231) 933-4907 (Traverse City) or toll free at (800) 337-8598. You may also choose to discuss Advance Directives with your mental health workers.