



What is a Medical Advance Directive?

A medical advance directive is a legal document that explains your medical care choices before an emergency happens. If you cannot speak for yourself, this document tells your doctors what care you want and who can make decisions for you. Keep a copy in your medical records, at your doctor's office, at home, and give a copy to your patient advocate.

We Support Your Rights

Van Buren Community Mental Health (VBCMH) supports your right to make your own choices about Advance Directives, as allowed by law. This brochure will help you understand your options for medical and psychiatric Advance Directives so you can plan ahead for your care. If you have questions or need help, please contact your case manager, your support team, or VBCMH Customer Service at 269-655-3333.

Contact

24/7 Crisis Line: 1-800-922-1418

Direct: 269-657-5574

Customer Service: 269-655-3333

TTY: MI Relay Service at 7-1-1

Locations & Hours

Paw Paw Family Resource Center

801 Hazen St., Paw Paw, MI 49079

Phone: 269-657-5574

Hartford Family Resource Center

57418 CR 681, Hartford, MI 49057

Phone: 269-621-6251

Lifespan

61899 M-43, Bangor, MI 49013

Phone: 269-427-5671

South Haven Family Resource Center

1007 E. Wells St., South Haven, MI 49090

Phone: 269-637-5297

Main Office Hours

Monday-Friday

8:30am-5:00pm

***Hours vary by location, please call to confirm current hours of operation.**

vbcmh.com



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Advance Directives

Plan Today So Your Voice Is Heard Tomorrow

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Direct: 269-657-5574

Life-threatening Emergency: 911

TTY: MI Relay Service at 7-1-1

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Getting Started is Simple Common Questions About Advance Directives

You can create an Advance Directive by filling out a form about your care choices. Your case manager or support staff can help you get the forms, explain the three types, and answer your questions.

Medical Advance Directive

A Medical Advance Directive is a document where you choose another person to make medical decisions for you if you cannot speak for yourself. This person is called your patient advocate. They can make decisions about things like hospital care, medications, and organ donation. This type of Advance Directive is also called a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care.

Psychiatric Advance Directive

A Psychiatric Advance Directive is a document where you choose another person to make mental health care decisions for you in the future if you are not able to make decisions for yourself.

Living Will

A Living Will is a written document that explains what type of medical treatment you want if you become very sick and cannot speak for yourself. It tells your doctors, family, and patient advocate what care you want. A Living Will is different from a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care because it explains what treatment you want, instead of choosing a person to make decisions for you. Living Wills are not officially recognized by Michigan law, but they can still be used to show your treatment wishes.

When you make an Advance Directive, there are a few important things you will need to decide and write down. These choices help your care team and your patient advocate follow your wishes.

Who can have an Advance Directive?

You can have an Advance Directive if you are 18 years old or older, able to make your own decisions, and do not have a legal guardian.

Do I have to have an Advance Directive?

No. You do not have to have one. No one can make you create an Advance Directive, and no one can tell you what to put in it. You can still receive medical and mental health services even if you do not have an Advance Directive.

What is the Difference Between a Medical and Psychiatric Advance Directive?

A Medical Advance Directive is used for medical care, like hospital care or treatment for physical health problems.

A Psychiatric Advance Directive is used for mental health care, like treatment during a mental health crisis.

Both documents help make sure your wishes are known and followed if you cannot make decisions for yourself.

What does my Patient Advocate need to do before they can act for me?

Your Patient Advocate must sign a form that says they agree to make decisions for you. This form must be signed before they can act on your behalf.

When would my Patient Advocate make decisions for me?

Your Patient Advocate can only make decisions for you if doctors and mental health professionals decide that you are not able to make decisions or understand your treatment choices.

When might I not be able to make my own decisions?

This could happen if you have:

- A stroke
- An accident that leaves you unconscious
- Dementia
- Mental health symptoms that are so severe that you cannot make informed decisions about your care

Who decides that I cannot make my own decisions?

For medical care, your doctor and another doctor or psychologist must agree that you cannot make medical decisions. For mental health care, a doctor and another mental health professional must agree that you cannot make decisions about your mental health treatment.

Important Legal Information

Keep a copy of your Advance Directive with your case manager so it can be added to your clinical record. You can change or cancel it at any time. Michigan law requires two witnesses who are not family members, your doctor, or staff where you receive services. You do not need a notary.