10 Steps To Completing Your Advance Healthcare Directive

Preparing your Advance Healthcare Directive (AHD) is an important step in your end-of-life planning. To complete the form, you don't need to hire a lawyer, although you may choose to have a knowledgeable advisor review your completed document. Completing this important form can help give you peace of mind that you have taken an important step toward your own end-of-life planning.

To complete your Advance Healthcare Directive, follow these steps:

1. Obtain an "official" Advance Healthcare Directive form from your state. AHD forms vary by state.
2. Search online to obtain one or two additional Advance Directive (AD) forms from other sources. This will help you see the variations and instructions that different AD forms provide.
3. Discuss the forms with your immediate family or other loved ones.
4. Discuss the forms with your primary care physician.
5. Discuss the forms with the person whom you name as proxy.
6. Gather information about your current medical conditions and their possible implications for future medical problems and treatment.
7. Determine and clarify your own end-of-life wishes.
8. Ask your physician, family or other loved one(s), and proxy if they are willing to support your final wishes.
9. Complete the AHD form that best fits your needs. Be sure to add or modify language to reflect your specific final wishes.
10. Follow the Witness signature instructions on the form exactly. Most, but not all states, require two "disinterested" people to sign the form as witnesses.

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