

## **OKLAHOMA NOTICE TO PATIENTS REQUIRED BY THE PATIENT SELF DETERMINATION ACT**

This notice is given to you to tell you about your rights, under Oklahoma law, to make medical care decisions. After reading this, you may still have questions. If so, you should ask your doctor and other caregivers those questions.

1. **Who will inform me about my medical care options?** Your doctor must talk about medical care options with you, in terms you can understand.
2. **Who decides what medical care I will get?** As a competent adult, you decide what medical care you will get. You have the right to accept, refuse, or stop any medical care; including life-sustaining treatment, which may prolong your life.
3. **What if I am not able to make my own decisions?** If you can not make decisions about your own medical care, someone must make them for you. An advance directive is the best way to tell people what you want done. You can also name the person you want to make those decisions for you, if you can no longer make decisions for yourself.
4. **What is an advance directive?** An advance directive is a written document you sign while you are still able to make your own decisions. You can use an advance directive to tell people ahead of time what medical care you want. You can also name the person you want to make medical decisions for you, if you can not make them yourself. Oklahoma has three kinds of advance directives: 1. living will, 2. health care proxy, and 3. durable power of attorney for health care. You can have one, two, or all of these advance directives. Oklahoma's living will and appointment of a health care proxy are combined in a form called Advance Directive for Health Care.
5. **What is a living will?** A living will is a document that allows you to state your choices about life-sustaining treatment.
6. **What is a health care proxy?** A health care proxy is a person you name to make medical decisions for you, including decisions about life-sustaining treatment. You appoint your health care proxy by naming them in the Advance Directive for Health Care Form.
7. **What is a durable power of attorney for health care?** A durable power of attorney for health care is a document in which you name the person you want to make routine medical care decisions for you when you can not. Oklahoma's durable power of attorney for health care is a separate legal document that requires the help of a lawyer. The person you name can also make decisions about life-sustaining treatment, if you name that person as your health care proxy using the health care proxy section of the Advance Directive for Health Care Form.
8. **Do I need all of these documents?** The Advance Directive for Health Care Form can cover most situations.
9. **May I refuse tube feeding?** You can be sure that you do not receive tube feeding (artificially administered water, food, or both) by stating your wishes in a living will. You can also do this by appointing a health care proxy to make such decisions for you. If you fail to give express instructions, tube feeding can not be withheld from you except in very limited situations.
10. **Should I sign an advance directive?** Whether to sign an advance directive is entirely your decision. One reason many people wish to sign an advance directive is to avoid a legal dispute if they become ill and can not make their wishes known. Signing an advance directive, or at the very least, talking about your medical care wishes with your loved ones and your doctors before a medical crisis makes good sense.
11. **Can I be sure my instructions will be followed?** If properly signed, your Advance Directive for Health Care is legally binding. If they can not follow your directions, they will make arrangements to transfer your care to others who will.
12. **If I sign an advance directive now, can I change my mind?** Yes, you can give new instructions by writing them down or telling someone. You can sign a new advance directive at any time you want. In fact, you should go over your advance directive at least once a year to be sure it correctly states your wishes.
13. **What if I do not have an advance directive?** If you do not have an advance directive and are unable to make your own decisions, medical decisions will be left to a legal guardian, if one has been appointed. Without an advance directive or court-appointed legal guardian, Oklahoma law is not clear about who will make decisions for you. Usually, your family, doctors, and hospital can agree about your medical care.
14. **What if I signed "Directive to Physicians" under the old law?** If you signed a Directive to Physicians under the old Oklahoma law, it is valid and binding under the new law. You may want to sign a new advance directive because it covers more situations. The new law, effective 9-1-1992, allows you to name the person you want to make your medical decisions.
15. **What if I signed an advance directive in another state?** Advance directives signed in other states are valid and binding in Oklahoma for anything Oklahoma law allows.