

# GLOSSARY

## Advance Directives

### ADVANCE DIRECTIVE

A document in which a person either states choices for medical treatment or designates who should make treatment choices if the person should lose decision-making capacity. The term can also include oral statements by the patient.

### ARTIFICIAL NUTRITION AND HYDRATION

A method of delivering a chemically-balanced mix of nutrients and fluids when a patient is unable to eat or drink. The patient may be fed through a tube inserted directly into the stomach, a tube put through the nose and throat into the stomach, or an intravenous tube.

### CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR)

A medical procedure, often involving external chest compression, administration of drugs, and electric shock, used to restore the heartbeat at the time of a cardiac arrest.

### DECISION-MAKING CAPACITY

The ability to make choices that reflect an understanding and appreciation of the nature and consequences of one's actions.

### DECLARATION

One type of advance directive, commonly referred to as a living will.

### DNR

Do Not Resuscitate; a medical order to refrain from cardiopulmonary resuscitation if a patient's heart stops beating.

### DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTH CARE (DPOA)

An advance directive in which an individual names someone else (the "agent" or "proxy") to make health care decisions in the event the individual becomes unable to make them. The DPOA can also include instructions about specific possible choices to be made.

### HOSPICE

A program that provides care for the terminally ill in the form of pain relief, counseling, and custodial care, either at home or in a facility.

**LEGAL GUARDIAN**

A person charged (usually by court appointment) with the power and duty of taking care of and managing the property and rights of another person who is considered incapable of administering his or her own affairs.

**LIFE-SUSTAINING TREATMENT**

A medical intervention administered to a patient that prolongs life and delays death.

**PALLIATIVE CARE**

Medical interventions intended to alleviate suffering, discomfort, and dysfunction but not to cure (such as pain medication or treatment of an annoying infection).

**PERSISTENT VEGETATIVE STATE**

As defined by the American Academy of Neurology, “a form of eyes-open permanent unconsciousness in which the patient has periods of wakefulness and physiologic sleep/wake cycles but at no time is aware of himself or his environment.”

**PROXY**

A person appointed to make decisions for someone else, as in a durable power of attorney for health care (also called a surrogate or agent).

**TERMINAL CONDITION**

In most states, a status that is incurable or irreversible and in which death will occur within a short time. There is no precise, universally accepted definition of “a short time,” but in general it is considered to be less than one year.

**VENTILATOR**

A machine that moves air into the lungs for a patient who is unable to breathe naturally.