

**POLICY:** ADVANCE MEDICAL DIRECTIVES

**PURPOSE:**

It is the policy of Gordon Memorial Hospital to honor patients' preferences regarding medically indicated treatments whenever possible. Gordon Memorial Hospital respects the rights of the patient and recognizes the individual needs of each patient to make informed decisions regarding his or her medical care.

Gordon Memorial Hospital will comply with the Patient Self Determination Act and will facilitate the process for patients to express their preferences regarding treatment or to designate a representative to act in the best interest of the patients.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Admission personnel will:
  - a. At the time of admission, provide all inpatients 19 years and older with the following:
    - A copy of the Nebraska Advance Directives booklet
    - The Gordon Memorial Hospital's policy on Advance Directives.
  - b. Ask if the patient has an Advance Directive. Ask if they would like the Nebraska Advance Directives booklet to assist them in making one.
  - c. Have all inpatients or their representative sign that they have received information regarding Advance Directives. The Admission person will also sign as witness. This document will be sent to the nurses station to be included as part of the medical record.
  - d. If the patient has an Advance Directive, a copy will be sent to the nurse's station to become part of the medical record. The patient or family should retain the original Advance Directive.
  - e. All Advance Directives must be signed and witnessed or notarized. No more than one witness may be an administrator or employee of a healthcare provider caring for the patient.
2. Nursing:
  - a. If the patient has an Advance Directive, the nursing staff will flag the chart.

The healthcare provider must follow your Advance Directive unless you have been informed that they are unwilling to do so. If they are unwilling to follow your living will,

the healthcare provider or physician must assist in transferring your care to another provider who is willing to do so. If the healthcare provider is unwilling to follow your power of attorney for health care, your agent or representative must make arrangements to transfer you to another provider who is willing to follow your power to do so.

This document provides for power to make medically related decisions only and does not imply appointed power to make legal or financial decisions.

DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) Order – This states that CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) is not to be initiated if breathing stops or the heart stops beating. The order may be written by the person's doctor after discussing the issue beforehand with the person (if possible) or his or her proxy or family.

### **WHEN DO ADVANCE DIRECTIVES TAKE EFFECT?**

Your Advance Directive generally takes effect only after you no longer can make personal decisions. As long as you can make personal decisions on your own behalf, your health care givers will rely on you, not on your Advance Directive.

All patients at Gordon Memorial Hospital can expect to receive care based on their assessed needs for physical, psychosocial, spiritual and cultural interventions. Patients receiving terminal care will be treated with the utmost dignity and attention to optimize the comfort needs for the patient and the family. No patient will be discriminated against with respect to provision of care or otherwise, based on whether he has executed an Advance Directive.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- In the Event you choose to write up a "Living Will" or "Special Medical Power of Attorney", you may pick up a form at the Receptionist, see your attorney or get information from the internet.
- If you have a "Living Will" or "Special Medical Power of Attorney", provide copies for your family members, health care provider(s) and carry with you (in a wallet, glove compartment of car or similar location). If you have a planned admission to a hospital, take copies for the hospital to include in your medical chart and inform all medical personnel involved with your case of the existence of such documents.
- Any Advance Directives may be canceled or changed at any time. This should be communicated to your physician and family.