

Advance Care Planning

When is the best time to complete advance care planning (ACP) paperwork?

Accidents or illness can happen suddenly without warning, so it is best to complete ACP paperwork before you need it.

Do I need a lawyer to create my ACP paperwork and do the forms need to be notarized?

No, you do not need a lawyer to create your ACP paperwork. All you need to do is sign your forms in front of two competent adult witnesses (see the forms for information on who can witness your signature) or in front of a notary who is authorized by the State of Texas.

Where do I store my ACP paperwork after I sign my forms?

Keep your signed original ACP paperwork in a safe place in your home. Do not store your forms in a safe deposit box. Give a copy of your signed forms to your doctors and health care providers. Be sure your Medical Power of Attorney or agent knows where you have stored your original forms and be sure that they have copies, too. If you have MyChart and give copies of your paperwork to a Texas Health Physicians Group doctor or advanced practice provider or Texas Health hospital, they can store a copy of your forms.

What if I change my mind about the ACP decisions I have made?

It is easy to update or change your ACP paperwork. Your forms can be changed at any time or for any reason. Simply complete new ACP forms and destroy the old ones. Be sure to tell your doctors, health care providers, family, and Medical Power of Attorney or agent that you have made changes to your ACP forms. Also give them copies of your new paperwork. If you give your paperwork updates to a Texas Health Physicians Group doctor or advanced practice provider or Texas Health hospital, they can update your new forms in MyChart.

Will my wishes be honored if I show my ACP paperwork to a doctor or healthcare provider?

Doctors and health care providers should honor your ACP paperwork if your decisions are permissible under state law.

Will my ACP paperwork be accepted if I travel to another state?

Generally, if you are visiting in another state, doctors and healthcare providers will honor out-of-state ACP paperwork if it meets with the legal requirements of the state. If you move out of Texas, you should complete a new ACP paperwork for that state.

Having your wishes known is a gift to your loved ones.

