

The Importance of Advance Healthcare Decisions & Planning



Background

Advance medical directives are separate legal documents from a will.

They ensure that one's wishes for medical care and treatment are followed in the event that they have a terminal, incurable medical condition and cannot communicate or make their own decisions.

Executed correctly, health care providers must follow the signer's wishes & listen to those the signer appoints to act on their behalf.

Types of Advance Directives



There are two types of advance medical directives that legal counsel can help draft:

- 1.) "Living Wills" (referred to in Oklahoma as Advance Directives for Health Care); and
- 2.) "Health Care Proxies" (referred to in Oklahoma as Medical Powers of Attorney).

The format and content of advance medical directives vary from state to state, but the purpose and intent of the documents are recognized by all states.



Advance Directive for Health Care ("Living Will")

A Living Will / AMD states your desires to allow doctors to act upon your wishes regarding the termination of artificial life support, nutrition, and hydration in certain terminal, incurable medical conditions.

In this document, you appoint an agent to carry out your decisions on your behalf.

Medical Power of Attorney



Medical professionals require patients' authorization for certain treatments.

A Medical POA allows you to appoint an agent to make medical care decisions for you in the event that you have an illness/accident & you cannot make or communicate your own medical decisions.

It gives the person you designate as your agent the authority to make a wide range of medical decisions on your behalf, the ability to access to your medical information, etc.