

Patient Advocate Guide

You have been chosen as the Patient Advocate for: _____

What is a Patient Advocate?

A Patient Advocate is someone who is chosen by a person to make medical treatment decisions for them when they can't think or speak for him or herself. This may happen if the person is very sick or is injured. To accept the role of Patient Advocate, you must sign a Patient Advocate Acceptance form.

What Does a Patient Advocate Do?

The Patient Advocate makes medical treatment decisions for a person. These decisions are based on that person's wishes and preferences for care. It is important that there is a helpful talk between the person and the Patient Advocate early on. This will ensure the Patient Advocate will know what to do in case the person cannot speak for him or herself. Being chosen as the Patient Advocate means the person has a lot of trust in you to act for him or her. Some important things to think about are:

- Am I willing to be the Patient Advocate?
- Do I know the medical choices the person would want?
- Can I make medical choices that the person would want even if I do not agree with them?
- Am I able to make these medical choices even if it is very hard to do?

When Do I Make Decisions for the Person?

Your patient advocate role will go into effect when two doctors, or a doctor and a psychologist, agree that the person cannot make his or her own medical treatment decisions.

You will be asked to continue to make medical decisions only as long as the person is unable to make decisions.

How Can I Prepare?

It is helpful to talk with the person who chose you. It is important that you can understand and make the medical choices that you know the person would want.

You may ask the person questions like:

- What is important to you to live well?
- What does quality of life mean to you?
- What would make life not worth living?



Information
Provided by:

