Introduction

Health Care Proxy & Living Will

October 2014
Guidance & Information Access

Provide guidance for some important issues on ICC Web site and community outreach.

- Health Care Proxy and Living Will
- Dealing with Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid (Mapping the Maze)
- Hindu Antyesthi Rituals (Final Rites)
- Family Care Giver Handbook
- Community Initiative for TB education (CITE)
- Women’s health information
Tasks we face

Not urgent
Not important
(such as review and disposing of junk mail)
Tasks we face

Urgent
Not important
(Such as receiving sales or promotional sales call)

Not urgent
Not important
Tasks we face

- Urgent
  - Important (such as timely filing of taxes)
  - Not important
- Not urgent
  - Not important
Tasks we face

- Urgent
  - Not important
- Urgent
  - Important
- Not urgent
  - Not important
- Not urgent
  - Important
  (such as preparation of Health Care Proxy)
Health Care Proxy and Living Will

Gift to your loved ones
- Eliminate a difficult subject from conversation
- Give them comfort of knowing what you prefer
- Set an example so that others can follow

Gift to yourself
- Get the health Care you need and want
- Choose not to get the health care you do not want.
- Promotes human dignity
- Have a peace of mind
Health Care Proxy and Living Will

Five Wishes ®

Benefits

- Easy to use
- Comprehensive
- Discussion guide
- Legal in 42 states, useful everywhere
- Give you peace of mind
Health Care Proxy and Living Will

Health conditions that may require proxy may be temporary or permanent

- Serious accident
- Stroke
- Alzheimer or other impairment
- Life threatening illness
- Psychological trauma
Health Care Proxy and Living Will

- Anyone age 18 or older, whether single or married, a parent or an adult child, in good health or poor health.

- It allows a person to specify his or her choices for health care when they can not express it.

- This is best done when there is no stress of upcoming procedures and being rushed.

- Distributed by doctors, nurses, lawyers, hospitals and hospices, faith communities and a variety of employers and retiree groups.
What People Want:

When facing end-of-life decisions, most of us would want the following wishes honored:

- To die at home
- To be free from pain
- To be in the company of loved ones
- To retain control of the care we receive
The Contrast of Reality

- Less than 25 percent of Americans die at home, although more than 70 percent say that is their wish (Harvard Public Opinion Poll, 1999)

- Dying is often unnecessarily painful and isolating (SUPPORT Study, JAMA, 1995)

- Only 15 to 20 percent of the population has completed an advance directive (Archives of Internal Medicine study, July 2002)
Reasons for This Stark Reality:

- The end of life is often treated *only* as a medical moment.

- **People lack the care they want** – almost everyone has a “horror story” of a loved one dying in pain or isolation that could have been avoided.

- Feelings of helplessness and fear lead to the appeal of assisted suicide as a “solution.”
Aging with Dignity

- National, non-profit organization founded in 1996

- Helps people to plan for and receive the care they want in case of serious illness

- Has grown to serve twenty million Americans by creating and distributing Five Wishes

- Bilingual versions made available including Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali and Urdu.
FIVE WISHES® covers:

1. Which person you want to make health care decisions for you when you can’t make them yourself

2. The kind of medical treatment you want or don’t want

3. How comfortable you want to be

4. How you want people to treat you

5. What you want your loved ones to know
Wish 1: The person you want to make health care decisions for you when you can’t make them yourself

- Known in legal terms as *durable power of attorney for health care*

- Allows you to name a primary person and two next choices to act on your behalf – temporarily or permanently

- Offers suggestions for choosing the right person and naming alternate choices
Wish 2: The kind of medical treatment you want or don’t want

- Part commonly known as a “living will”
- Expresses general instructions for your caregiver, such as the need to take medicine for pain, even if it leaves you sleepy
- Includes examples of “life support” such as tube feeding or CPR
- Gives you space to write instructions based on personal beliefs
Wish 3: How comfortable you want to be

- Stresses that you want your pain managed

- Expresses your choices for types of care, such as having a cool, moist cloth placed on your forehead if you have a fever, having your favorite music played, etc.

- You cross out or keep items based on your preferences
Wish 4: How you want people to treat you

- What others should keep in mind if you become seriously ill
- Whether you want to have people around or your hand held when possible
- Whether you want prayers said
- Ideas for your surroundings, such as having pictures of loved ones handy
Wish 5: What you want your loved ones to know

- A truly unique part of Five Wishes

- Encourages you to express matters of deep importance in an age where families often live apart

- Allows you to offer love and forgiveness to those who have hurt you

- Communicates practical matters such as preferences for memorial or burial
Preparation requires:

- Print your name including your birth date
- Read the statement carefully
- Ask two witnesses to be present (see witness statement)
- Sign your Five Wishes in front of two witnesses (in some states, the document needs to be notarized)
- Witnesses don’t have to read your wishes
After completing

- Make copies of your completed *Five Wishes* for your family, friends, Health Care Agent and doctor

- Discuss your wishes with your health care proxy and family

- Keep it available (in your top drawer, not your safe deposit box)

- Carry your wallet card
Additional Considerations

- Be familiar with a number of other resources:
  - MOLST Form
  - Personal Self Assessment Scale (PSAS)
- Visit The Conversation Project and learn about discussing the subject with your family
- Website -- [www.theconversationproject.com](http://www.theconversationproject.com)
- Encourage your friends and family to prepare Health Care proxy and Living Will.
**Additional Resources:**

- *Five Wishes Video* (VHS or DVD), designed to help present *Five Wishes* to groups or families.

- *Next Steps Guide*, a companion booklet to *Five Wishes*, with conversation starters, commonly asked questions and answers, etc.

- *Bilingual Five Wishes*: Now available in 26 different languages including Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi and Urdu.
Benefits to us and our loved ones

- End bed-side guessing game and guilt
- Create a discussion tool for your family and physician
- Get the care you want and deserve – even if you can no longer make your own decisions
- Effectively communicate what you want – or don’t want
- Helps caregiver to be there when your loved ones need you the most
- Promotes human dignity
ICC has launched a new initiative to make this document easily accessible by e-delivery for our Indian Community.

Access to complimentary copy and guidance to prepare Five Wishes online from our website - www.ouricc.org
Congratulations for taking time to learn and to take care of this important issue!
Indian Circle for Caring USA Inc.,
(ICC)

www.ouricc.org