



# Advance Care Planning

## What you need to know about Durable Power of Attorney and Living Will

### What is Advance Care Planning?

It is a process to think about, talk about and plan for a life-threatening illness or end-of-life care. It is recommended that all adults, over the age of 18, complete an advance directive.

### Why do I need it?

Making decisions about medical care is not always easy. It's your right to participate and plan for your care. But at some point, you may become unable to make your own healthcare decisions.

An advance directive is a legal document in which you can state your preferences about medical care. It gives you a vehicle by which you can give instructions for your future care. It has two parts:

- Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care
- Living Will

A Durable Power of Attorney is a document where you can name another person to act as your healthcare agent if you are unable to make medical decisions. A Living Will allows you to direct your family and healthcare providers on what medical treatment you wish to receive if you are so ill that you are no longer able to make your own choices.

### Do I need both documents?

It's a good idea to have both because they serve two different purposes. A Durable Power of Attorney takes effect whenever you become unable to make decisions, such as during a surgery or when you become temporarily unconscious. A Living Will takes effect only when there is no hope of recovery.

### What do I do to create these documents?

Contact your North Country Healthcare (NCH) affiliate:

- Androscoggin Valley Hospital: 603.915.2225
- Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital: 603.388.4257
- Weeks Medical Center: 603.788.2521

You may also visit [northcountryhealth.org](http://northcountryhealth.org), or Foundation for Healthy Communities at [Healthynh.com](http://Healthynh.com).



Androscoggin Valley Hospital  
North Country Home Health & Hospice Agency  
Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital  
Weeks Medical Center