

ADVANCE DIRECTIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

DEFINITIONS

Advance Directive- A written instruction, such as a living will or durable power of attorney for health care, recognized under state law, relating to the provision of health care when the individual is incapacitated. The document expresses wishes about treatment preferences and the designation of a surrogate if the patient is incapacitated. Mason General Hospital and Family of Clinics use the 5 Wishes Model and Honoring Choices Pacific NW.

Durable Power of Attorney/Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care (abbreviated below as "DPOA") - A document that designates an agent or proxy to make health care decisions if the patient is no longer able to make them. The document directs the surrogate to function as "attorney-in-fact" and make decisions regarding all treatment, including the final decision about cessation of treatment.

Health Care Directive (abbreviated below as "Directive")- Term referring to Advance Directive or subset of Advance Directive, e.g. Mental Health Care Directive, Behavioral Health Care Directive, Durable Power of Attorney, POLST, etc.

Physician Order for Life Sustaining Treatment (abbreviated below as "POLST")- Document used to communicate decisions about the types(s) of life-sustaining treatment a patient desires that is signed by a licensed independent medical practitioner. Similar to an Advance Directive, but has more authority as a physician order that healthcare workers must follow.

POLICY

Mason General Hospital and Family of Clinics respects the rights of patients and, recognizes that each patient is an individual with unique health care needs. Because of the importance of respecting each patient's personal dignity, Mason General Hospital and Family of Clinics provides considerate, respectful care focused upon the patient's individual needs.

Mason General Hospital and Family of Clinics affirms the patient's right to make decisions regarding his/her medical care, including the decision to discontinue treatment, to the extent permitted by law.

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The care of the dying patient is provided to optimize the comfort and dignity of the patient by:

- Treating primary and secondary symptoms that respond to treatment as desired by the patient or surrogate decision-maker and effectively managing pain.
- Acknowledging the psychosocial and spiritual concerns of the patient and the family regarding the dying and the expression of grief by the patient and family.
- By promoting the right of the patient, in collaboration with his/her physician, to make decisions involving his/her health care, including: The right of the patient to formulate Directives (verbal and written) and appoint a surrogate to make health care decisions on his/her behalf to the extent permitted by law.

Mason General Hospital and Family of Clinics has in place a mechanism to ascertain the existence of/or provide information about Directives at the time of presentation:

- This applies to all adults, 18 years or older that present as an inpatient, short stay/observation or a therapeutic outpatient.
- By providing the patient with written information and verbal communication of these rights at the time of admission.
- The provision of care is not conditioned on the existence of a Directive.
- If on file, the most recent Directive(s) is kept in the patient's medical record.
- The Directive(s) can be changed at any time while the person is competent to do so and the file will be updated.
- It is the responsibility of the patient's legal decision maker to exercise the rights delineated on behalf of the patient, if the patient has been judged incompetent in accordance with the law or is found by his/her physician to be medically incapable of

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understanding the proposed treatment or procedure, or is unable to communicate his/her wishes regarding treatment.

On advice of the legal counsel of Mason General Hospital and Family of Clinics it shall be noted that, according to the law,

HOSPITAL AND CLINIC STAFF AND HOSPITAL AND CLINIC NOTARIES ARE NOT ABLE TO WITNESS, NOR FACILITATE IN, THE PREPARATION OF A LIVING WILL, ADVANCE DIRECTIVE, POWER OF ATTORNEY DESIGNATION, OR OTHER HEALTHCARE DIRECTIVE TO THE PHYSICIAN.

PROCEDURE

REGISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES:

When an adult, 18 years or older presents for registration to the hospital, the Registration staff will ascertain whether there is a Directive/Living Will on file in the Medical Record.

This can be accomplished by asking the patient or surrogate to respond to the Living Will question within the electronic medical record and indicating one of the following responses: No, info provided; No, info not provided; Yes, not on file; Yes, on file; or unknown.

HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Scanned versions of current Directives are available in the Electronic Medical Record.

[POLST, Advance Directive and POA Scanning Procedure](#)

NURSING STAFF AND/OR UNIT SECRETARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

At the time of the Nursing Admission History Assessment, the following information will be ascertained;

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- Verification that the Advance Directive, Living Will, Mental Health Directive Durable Power of Attorney and/or other Directives on file is/are current. If current, note in Nursing Admission History Assessment.
- If the patient or surrogate state there is a document, but it is not in the EMR, direct the patient or surrogate to obtain this document for our file as soon as possible.
- When provided, place in HIM scanning basket.
- Answer any questions; make appropriate referrals for further information to the Discharge Planning Department. (An automatic referral is triggered in the EMR system if you check 'Yes' to the patient/family wanting further information).
- At discharge, **original** version of the POLST will be returned to the patient or their current care facility; a copy is maintained in the medical record sent to HIM.

DISCHARGE PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES:

- When an order and/or a referral is made to the Discharge Planning Department, they will continue to answer any questions to the best of their ability and provide additional resources as needed.

Family of Clinics:

- Mason General Hospital-owned clinics will be encouraged to ask and obtain a copy of the patient's Directives, for those patients over the age of 18 who have such Directives.
- The Clinics owned by Mason County Public Hospital District will provide written educational materials to any patient asking for more information related to Directives.
- If a patient is in one of the Clinic settings, and experiences a cardiac arrest, an attempt to rescue the patient will be initiated and 911 will be called.

ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assure that the above-mentioned procedures are followed by the employed staff of the facility.

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- Provide the opportunity for staff education; and community education in conjunction with other area health care organizations.
- Provide written material on Advance Directives, DPOA, and POLST.
- Honoring Choices Pacific NW Advance Directive form is located on the Intranet under MGH Forms, Cerner-EMR folder. Print a copy as needed.
- Resources – Honoring Choices Pacific NW forms.

Referenced Documents:

TJC Standard RI.01.05.01

Medicare and Medicaid Conditions of Participation. (Current manuals maintained in HIM)

Advance Directives and other End of Life Documents. Washington State Medical Association.

Found at:

https://wsma.org/wcm/For_Patients/End_of_Life/wcm/Patients/Know_Your_Choices/End_of_Life_Resources_Home.aspx

Relevant Revised Codes of Washington:

RCW 70.122- Natural Death Act

RCW 71.32- Mental Health Advance Directives

RCW 70.245- Death with Dignity Act

RCW 11.94- Power of Attorney

Federal Patient Self-Determination Act- 42 CFR Part- 417



Advance Directive -
Honoring Choices Pac