



Foundation for
Healthy Communities

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Foundation for Healthy Communities Observes National Healthcare Decisions Day

Joins National Initiative to Highlight the Importance of Advance Directives on April 16, 2024

CONCORD – The Foundation for Healthy Communities, along with many other organizations across the state, will join a national movement in observance of **National Healthcare Decisions Day**, April 16th, to highlight the importance of advance health care directives.

National Healthcare Decisions Day exists as an annual initiative nationwide to provide clear, concise and consistent information on health care decision-making to both the public and providers/facilities through the widespread availability and dissemination of simple, free and uniform tools to guide the process.

“National Healthcare Decisions Day serves as a reminder to engage in conversations with your health care provider, as well as your loved ones, regarding your preferences for medical care should a crisis arise,” said Janice McDermott, Program Coordinator at the Foundation for Healthy Communities. “Engaging in the conversation and completing an advance directive allows you to decide who will make your health care decisions should you ever lack the capacity to do so, and it’s one of the most important conversations for families to have with each other, especially during times like these.”

An advance directive guides the care delivered when a person lacks the capacity to make their own health care decisions. The Foundation for Healthy Communities in NH helps raise awareness about the importance of advance care planning on this important day and throughout the year. “National Healthcare Decisions Day provides a platform for educating both families and health care providers about the significance of advance care directives, urging proactive planning for serious illness or end-of-life care.” McDermott added.

In addition to advance directives, Provider Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) play an integral role in advance care planning. With the goal of improving the quality of care for patients who are seriously ill, POLST acts as a portable medical order that identifies, documents, communicates and honors patient medical treatment wishes that are honored across all care settings. It is a voluntary program for patients and providers that is designed to improve the understanding and communication of a patient’s medical care choices when patients move among different care settings.

The Foundation for Healthy Communities has served as the leading resource for advance care and end of life care planning, including POLST, for patients and their families, medical providers, hospitals and health systems throughout the state since 1998. The Foundation provides information to help people address the topic with family, friends and health care providers, as well as complete a written advance directive, such as health care

power of attorney and a living will, in accordance with New Hampshire law. More information and resources, including the Advance Care Planning Guide, are available free of charge online at www.healthynh.org.

The Foundation for Healthy Communities (FHC) is a non-profit organization that builds healthier communities for all by leading partnerships, fostering collaboration, and creating innovative solutions to advance health and health care.

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