Advanced Directives

Choosing a Health Care Agent

- Who would you like to speak for you if you can’t speak for yourself? Is it your spouse, sibling, best friend, etc.?
- You have the ability to refuse an individual access to the room when discussing your health care.

Types of Care

- **Everything**
  - You will get full medical treatment including IVs, surgery, feeding/hygiene tubes, diagnostic tests, etc. regardless of functional state.
  - At times, this is appropriate; at other times it is not.
  - Who decides?

- **Middle Path**
  - This is the choice most of us take.
  - It’s my personal choice: I want the best modern medicine has to offer while it is still useful and beneficial.
  - If I’m aware of what’s going on and can participate in life, if I’m not in persistant intractable pain, then keep me going.
  - If I’m not, please try reasonable – but not extraordinary – care should a serious life-threatening illness arise.
  - Use hospice and palliative care early.

- **Very Little or Nothing**
  - Letting nature take it’s course (allowing natural death)
  - This can be a reasonable choice when all hope and expectation of any kind of physical and mental recovery is impossible.
  - Hospice and palliative care is very useful and should be obtained.

- **Allow natural death**

After Death

- Organ donation – disposition of the body (burial, cremation, medical school donation, etc.)

Resources

- **My Directives** www.mydirectives.com
- **AARP** www.aarp.org/caregiving/financial-legal/free-printable-advance-directives/
- **Personal Medical Electronic Health Record**
  - MiMiri: www.mimirx.org
  - MyVax: www.myvax.com

Preparing for a Better End
by Dr. Dan Morhaim
www.thebetterend.com

Data adapted from the Maryland Behavioral Health Administration’s webinar “Advance Care Medical Planning: What You Need to Know and Why”, a webinar originally held on 12/2/2021. Presented by Dr. Dan Morhaim.

NAMI Maryland can help. Visit www.namimd.org or call 410-884-8691 for more information.

NAMI Maryland is working with the Maryland Behavioral Health Administration on CovidCONNECT. A free, online platform with resources and support for everyone who has been impacted by COVID-19. Learn more at covidconnect.health.maryland.gov