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TN Healthcare Decisions Act

What is the Tennessee Health Care Decisions Act?

The Health Care Decisions Act was enacted in 2004. The Act gives options and guidance for medical treatment for patients and healthcare professionals. The Act was created to make healthcare decision forms readily available and easy to execute.

What are some of the forms created by the Act?

Some of the forms created by the Act include the Advance Care Plan, Appointment of Health Care Agent, Appointment of Surrogate, and Physician Orders for Scope of Treatment (POST).

What is an Advance Care Plan?

The most common form used is the Advance Care Plan. An Advance Care Plan is like a detailed Living Will that can also include the appointment of an agent to make your healthcare decisions. The Advance Care Plan allows you specify whether you want CPR, life support, gastric tube feedings/IV fluids, and treatment of new conditions if you are permanently unconscious, suffering from an end-stage illness, in a state of permanent confusion, or dependent in all activities of your daily life. The Advance Care Plan also allows you to specify organ and tissue donation. If you want an Advance Care Plan, you can use our Advance Care Plan form.

What is the Appointment of a Health Care Agent form?

The Appointment of Health Care Agent is a document that is similar to a power of attorney for healthcare. It lets you name someone to make healthcare decisions for you if you are not able. Our Advance Care Plan form includes the appointment of a healthcare agent.

What is the Appointment of Surrogate form?

The appointment of a surrogate is the appointment of some other person (other than your agent or guardian) who is authorized to make healthcare decisions for you. The surrogate can make decisions only when you are incompetent and not able to make decisions for yourself. If you cannot make decisions for yourself, do not have an agent, and do not have a surrogate, your doctor can appoint a surrogate for you. The law gives the doctor a preference order in choosing the surrogate, which starts with your spouse, and then to your adult child, parent, adult sibling, or other adult relative.

What is a POST form?

A Physician Orders for Scope of Treatment, or POST form, is a form that your doctor completes after meeting with you. The form includes instructions for resuscitation, artificially administered nutrition, and medical interventions.

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