

Staying in the Circle of Life



Medical Advocacy and Advance Directives


Session 3



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CURES START HERE™



Partnerships for Native Health



Welcome

Agreements



We want to do what we can to make sure everyone feels comfortable while they're here. Some examples:

- Keep it confidential - everything anyone says stays in the room
- Listen with respect
- Stay on topic – we have a lot of information to go over and we want to make sure we cover it all
- Other things we can do?

What We Will Talk About Today



- Understanding advocacy and why it's important
- Finding reliable health information
- Learning how to get the most out of doctor visits
- Learning about **survivorship care plan** and **advance directives** and why they're important

What Is Medical Advocacy?



Medical advocacy involves –

- Knowing as much as you can about your own health situation
- Using that knowledge to exercise your right to receive high-quality healthcare

Finding Reliable, Accurate Information



- Who wrote the information?
- When was the information written?
- Who paid for the research and published the information?
- Don't rely on the Internet for information on diagnosis or treatment options!!

How to get the most out of your appointment . . .



- Make a list of questions, concerns, and **positive progress** to bring with you.
- Ask as many questions as you want!
- Make sure you leave your appointment with all of your questions addressed, and speak up if you don't understand something.
- Be assertive when necessary

How to get the most out of your appointment . . .



- If possible, bring a family member or community health worker with you to your appointment – **they can help take notes!**
- If you can't make your appointment, let your provider know right away, and **reschedule** right away.

Break



What Is An Advance Directive?



- An **advance directive** is a legal document that tells what kind of care people want to have when they can no longer express their own wishes.
- Two common examples are:
 - Living Will
 - Medical Durable Power of Attorney (also called Healthcare Power of Attorney)
- An advance directive can also include instructions about your healthcare decisions, such as donating an organ or tissue.

Why are advance directives important?



- You have the right to make decisions about your own health and treatment.
- It's important for family members and health care providers to know what kind of medical care someone wants at the end of life.

When should you complete an advance directive?



- Advance directives should be filled out while you're healthy.
- This gives you time to think about the end-of-life care you would choose if you were unable to communicate your wishes.
- It also gives you time to discuss your wishes with your loved ones.

<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Support/advance-directives>

Important Things to Know . . .



The laws about advance directives vary from state to state, so it's important to complete and sign an advance directive for the state where you live or where you expect to receive medical treatment.

<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Support/advance-directives>

Example: Five Wishes



Five Wishes is an advance directive that combines a **living will** and a **healthcare power of attorney** in addition to addressing matters of comfort and spirituality.

<http://www.rwjf.org/reports/grr/029110s.htm>



Things to Think About



- You can play an active role in getting the care you want at all stages of your life.
- There's a lot of information out there! Ask someone to help you find what is most reliable.
- Advocate to ensure that you get the most out of your doctor visits.
- Advance directives can help you plan how you want to be taken care of. They can be helpful for you and your family.

