



## Advance Health Care Planning: Things to Consider

While thinking through the issues surrounding advance directives can be challenging, it is helpful to loved ones because it provides clarity about the steps they should take to provide you with the health care of your choice. Below are some issues to consider carefully.

- Because the services of Christian Science practitioners and Christian Science nurses are not widely understood by the public, it's very important to articulate your desire for those services clearly in an advance directive.
- If you are considering appointing another person to make health care decisions for you, it's also very important to clearly explain your wishes to that person and make sure that (s)he is willing to carry them out if you ever become incapacitated or unable to speak for yourself.
- Many states have laws that govern who makes health care decisions for someone who has become legally incapacitated but does not have an advance directive. These laws typically assign first priority to a spouse, followed by other immediate family members.
- An advance directive may be revoked or changed at any time. It is important to periodically review yours to make sure that it reflects your current wishes, and to tell friends and family where to find the directive in case it needs to be used. **It's important to give a copy to the person you have designated as the one to make decisions** for you if it is needed.
- In most states, a power of attorney for health care does not entitle the attorney or agent to make financial or other general decisions on an individual's behalf. It is important to determine which additional documents may be needed to address such matters in the event that you become incapacitated or unable to speak for yourself.