



# When the most Important Decision Is Your *Life...*

## QUALITY OF LIFE DECISIONS...

*Who will decide on your quality of life when you no longer can?*

- In Illinois, it is your legal right to determine the kind of care you wish to receive. This includes your right to accept or refuse medical treatment as long as you are capable of doing so.
- Making a statement about the type of care you want in the future and documenting it is called an **ADVANCE DIRECTIVE**.

## BENEFITS OF AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE...

*How does an Advance Directive protect my medical rights?*

- Protects your right to make medical choices that can affect your life by formally recording and documenting your wishes for medical treatment prior to a serious illness or while you are able to make these important decisions.
- Supports your family through the responsibility and stress of having to make difficult decisions about your medical treatment because you have already documented your wishes.
- Guides your physician about the type of care you feel is best for you.

## CONSEQUENCES OF NOT HAVING AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE...

*How does an Advance Directive protect my medical rights?*

- If you do not have an Advance Directive and are unable to make decisions, or you are permanently unconscious, your healthcare providers may be required to do everything in their power to keep you alive, no matter what your condition or chances of recovery.

## **PROTECTING YOUR RIGHTS?**

*How do I begin protecting my rights?*

In Illinois, there are two documents available for your use:

*The Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care* and the *Living Will*.

### **Durable Power of Attorney**

In Illinois the Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care is the best way to assure that your instructions about your healthcare are followed.

Using the document you can:

- Choose someone called an agent to help enforce the decisions you have made about the healthcare you would like to receive in the event you are unable to make your decisions known.
- Choose successor agents in case your first choice decision-maker is unavailable to serve.

This document must be signed and witnessed, but need not be notarized.

### **Living Will**

A living will is used primarily by persons who have no one to choose as an agent. It directs the physician to withhold certain treatments for the terminally ill.

### **BE SURE TO:**

- ✓ Discuss your wishes with your loved ones and physician.
- ✓ Keep your form in a safe place and let someone you trust know where it is.
- ✓ Provide your agent, successor agents, and physician with a copy.

**For more information about  
Advance Directives and to  
obtain forms,  
Please ask the Secretary at our  
front desk as they will be  
happy to help you.**