

***“How can I be certain that my healthcare wishes are respected?”***



**The conversations to start, and the documents to have, so your healthcare wishes are honored throughout your lifetime**

If you are concerned about loved ones following your healthcare wishes

**You are not alone**

86 percent of older Americans would prefer to spend their final days at home rather than in a hospital. Yet, fewer than half have advanced care plans in place.



## Here's Where to Start

Prepare for the discussion with family members or loved ones by thinking about your wishes for medical care. Consider how and where you can maintain dignity and independence throughout your life. Commit to having “the conversation” with your loved ones and medical decision makers. Don't wait.

These conversations can be difficult. Think about writing down particular items you want to discuss about your health. Some people use a professional outside the family, such as a licensed social worker, to help guide them.

### Preparing for “the conversation” with family

Answer these questions in preparation:

- What is your goal for the conversation?
- Who should be present?
- What values guide my decisions? These may include religious and spiritual values.
- Will my loved ones be comfortable with my decisions? It's okay to disagree.
- What does quality of life mean to me?
- What kind of medical interventions am I comfortable with?
- What will bring me peace of mind at the end of my life?
- Who can I name to make decisions on my behalf? This person need not be a family member. Who do I trust to follow my wishes? These decisions may be very emotional for family members.

Get your printable worksheet and forms at:  
[www.cje.net/powerofattorney](http://www.cje.net/powerofattorney)

## Supporting Documents

Legal documents are needed to formalize your healthcare wishes and ensure compliance. These documents should be reviewed every few years. A lawyer or social worker can help guide you through the process of completing legal documents. The most important step is designating an agent.

A **Durable Power of Attorney (POA)** for Healthcare allows you to control who makes healthcare decisions in the event you are no longer able to do so, at any point during your life. With this document, you appoint an individual, known as an agent, who will make all medical decisions for you, if the need arises. It is important to carefully select an agent who understands and can follow your wishes. Your agent should be available and nearby or willing to travel to be with you in a time of need. It is also a good idea to list a secondary agent in the event the primary agent is unavailable.

A **Living Will** is different from a regular will. It explains your wishes for end of life medical care. It documents to your loved ones and medical professionals what types of life prolonging and comfort measures you want to receive when a doctor has determined that death is imminent. A living will can also provide direction to the agent you appoint in the POA for healthcare.



# How can CJE SeniorLife help?

We can refer you to the following supportive services:

**CJE Care Management**—We make assessments, develop Care Plans and refer clients to free and low-cost services. Must meet financial eligibility.

**Your Eldercare Consultants**—We develop Care Plans, coordinate care, guide families and find practical resources that support independence. Our social workers can assist in completing POA documents and identifying individuals willing to serve as agents. Services are fee-based.

**Consumer Assistance Resource Specialists**—We are available to help you identify and apply for the broadest possible range of benefits and support services available to older adults including referrals to eldercare or estate planning attorneys.

**Community Engagement**—We provide education geared toward your unique group on how and when to prepare these important documents. We can help navigate life choice decisions.

**Counseling Services**—Our highly-skilled Licensed Clinical Social Workers often assist older adults in working through and addressing end-of-life concerns and decisions. For example, they can help to examine core values and beliefs, which in turn may help to clarify what is ultimately included in advance planning documents.

**To find out more about our many services and programs, Call CJE SeniorLife at 773.508.1000.**

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THE CJE ADVANTAGE: We offer a full continuum of care. Individuals of all ages, faiths and income levels can access life-enriching opportunities, resources and healthcare. Our Jewish values make us the provider of choice for enhancing lives and navigating the process of positive aging.

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CJE SeniorLife® is a partner with the Jewish United Fund in serving our community.

1181b.2.2019

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