

# National Healthcare Decisions Day

On April 16, join Americans across the country to talk to others about your future healthcare decisions and complete your advance directive!

## Facts

All healthcare institutions are required to:

- Provide information about health care decision-making rights.
- Ask all patients if they have an advance directive.
- Educate their staff and community about advance directives.
- Not discriminate against patients based on an advance directive status.

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According to the Pew Research Center's study in 2006:

- 71% of Americans have thought about their end-of-life treatment preferences
- 95% had heard of a living will
- 29% had a living will

## Problem to Solve

Despite recent gains in public awareness of the need for advance care planning, studies indicate that most Americans have not exercised their right to make decisions about their healthcare in the event that they cannot speak for themselves.

## Solution

The National Healthcare Decisions Day, April 16, will help Americans understand that making future healthcare decisions includes much more than deciding what care they would or would not want; it starts with expressing preferences, clarifying values, identifying care preferences and selecting an agent to express healthcare decisions if patients are unable to speak for themselves.

The National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) initiative is a collaborative effort of national, state and community organizations committed to ensuring that all adults with decision-making capacity in the United States have the information and opportunity to communicate and document their healthcare decisions.

## Action

National Healthcare Decisions Day will leverage participating organizations' efforts and commitment to:

- ★ **Increase awareness** of the benefits of advance care planning so that Americans will be familiar with how to obtain and complete a healthcare power of attorney and/or living will, and talk to others about their decisions.
- ★ **Rally** a national media campaign so that Americans will know how to access information and resources to help them make future healthcare decisions.
- ★ **Mobilize** national, state and community organizations, healthcare providers and other key stakeholders to initiate outreach and educational activities for people to learn about advance care planning and complete advance directives and to honor those wishes when they become clinically relevant.

**In its first seven years (2008-2014), NHDD achieved the following:**

- Both houses of Congress as well as several states and local jurisdictions formally recognized NHDD.
- Over 110 national organizations participated.
- Over 1,400 state and local organizations participated.
- The US Army and Navy had bases participating worldwide.
- Over 3.5 million facility/organization staff members received advance directive training.
- Over 2 million members of the general public participated in NHDD events.
- Over 30,000 advance directives were completed on NHDD alone.
- There was a variety of coverage in newspapers, TV, radio, and the internet.
- Over 12 million people were exposed to NHDD via Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

## **Activities to Address the Problem**

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### **Community Engagement**

Develop and distribute free outreach materials and engagement strategies for professionals, providers, volunteers and stakeholders to encourage people in their communities to take action such as completing an advance directive and/or talking to their loved ones about their future healthcare decisions.

### **National Media Campaign**

Develop national communication tools including Public Service Announcements, advertisements, flyers and news stories to publicize National Healthcare Decisions Day activities and advance care planning resources.

### **Resources for the General Public**

Provide clear, concise and consistent information about advance directives, how to obtain them, and how individuals and families can easily make important decisions before a serious illness at [www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org](http://www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org) or [www.nhdd.org](http://www.nhdd.org).

### **Virtual Resource Library**

Collect and create an online directory of model programs, "best practices" and educational resources that participating organizations can use to enhance their advance care planning activities or systems.

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**For more information, program ideas, and to confirm participation, please visit [www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org](http://www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org) or [www.nhdd.org](http://www.nhdd.org)**

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