

# Patient Advocate Guide

## What is a Patient Advocate?

A Patient Advocate (PA) is someone you appoint to make medical decisions for you when you are unable to speak for yourself. This may happen if you are very sick or injured.

Your advocate(s) must sign the Patient Advocate Role Acceptance form before they can speak on your behalf.

## What is the Patient Advocate's Role?

The Patient Advocate shares your medical treatment decisions, based on your wishes and preferences for care. A meaningful conversation between you and your PA will help the PA know what to do in the event you cannot speak for yourself.

If you are asked to serve as a PA for another person, it means the person trusts you to act for him or her. Some important things to think about are:

- Am I *willing* to be the Patient Advocate?
- Do I *know the medical choices* the person would want?
- Can I make *medical choices that the person would want*, even if I do not agree with them?
- Am I able to make these medical choices, *even if it is very hard to do*?

## When Do I Make Decisions for the Person?

The Patient Advocate role will go into effect when two doctors, or a doctor and a licensed psychologist, agree you cannot make your own medical treatment decisions.

The Advocate will be asked to continue to make medical decisions only as long as you are unable to make decisions.

## Preparing for the Patient Advocate role:

It is helpful to talk with the person who chose you, so that you can understand and make the medical choices that you know the person would want. You may ask the person questions like:

- What is important to you to live well?
- What does quality of life mean to you?
- What would make life not worth living?

### Questions?

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