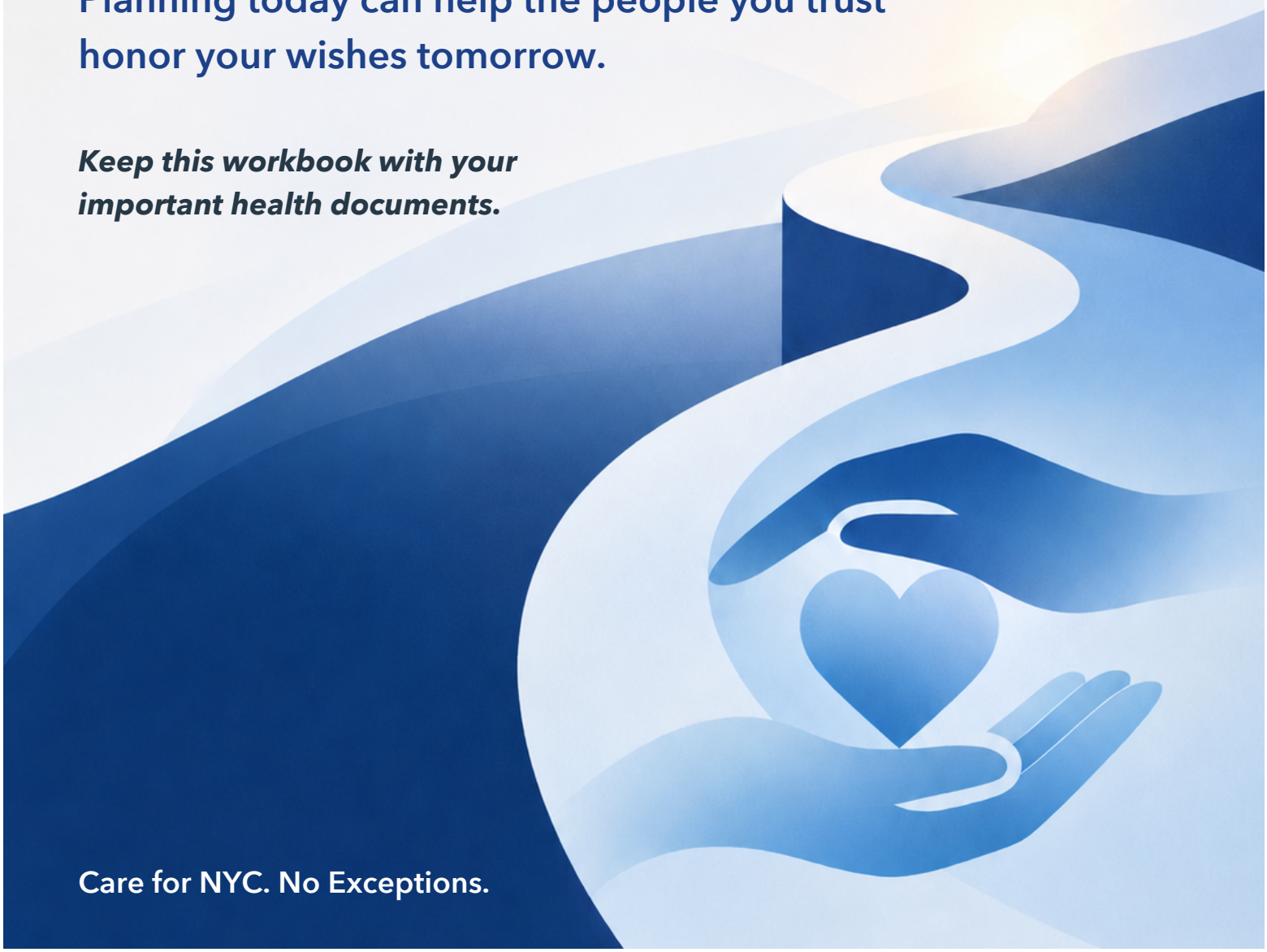
NYC HEALTH+ HOSPITALS | Woodhull

ADVANCE CARE PLANNING WORKBOOK



Planning today can help the people you trust honor your wishes tomorrow.

Keep this workbook with your important health documents.



Care for NYC. No Exceptions.

Your Conversation Starter Guide

Advance Care Planning Workbook

A simple guide to talking about your future medical wishes

Purpose: This booklet helps patients and families think, plan, talk, and keep talking about what matters most in future medical care.

Patient Name: _____

Date: _____ Unit/Clinic: _____

Sample booklet template | For patient education use

WELCOME: What is Advanced Care Planning?

In simple terms, it's **planning for your future medical care**. It is a way for you to think about what you would want in different medical situations and discuss that with your family (or someone that you choose to make those decisions when you can't). Talking about future health care can feel hard, but it can also bring clarity and help you be prepared. When you share what matters to you now, you help your loved ones and care team honor your wishes later.

Four Simple Steps

Step	What it means
1. Think (Page 4)	Figure out what matters most to you.
2. Plan (Page 4)	Decide who you want to talk to, when, and where.
3. Talk (Page 5)	Begin the conversation when you feel ready, and keep the conversation going when things change about your decisions or your care.
4. Share (Page 6)	Share your decisions in the form of Advanced Directives and other forms.

Important term: A **Health Care Proxy** is the form in which you assign someone you trust to make medical decision for you if you are too sick to speak for yourself. This person is called your **health care advocate/agent.**

Step 1: Think About What Matters to You

Before you talk with others, take a moment to gather your thoughts. You do not need to have all the answers right now.

My good day looks like:
Examples: time with family, being outside, prayer, music, or a favorite hobby.

_____

What helps me through hard times:
Examples: faith, culture, pets, trusted friends, or community support.

_____

My biggest worries are:
Examples: pain, being alone, losing independence, or being a burden.

_____

Finish this sentence: What matters most to me at the end of my life is...

_____

There are no right or wrong answers. Check the choice in each pair that feels most like you today. You can change your mind later.

	Option A	Option B
How much do you want to know about your illness?	☐ I only want to know the basics about my illness.	☐ I want to know all the details.
How much do you want to be involved in decisions with your doctor?	☐ I want my doctors to do what they think is best.	☐ I want to be part of every single choice.
Which one do you worry about more?	☐ I worry that I will not get enough medical care.	☐ I worry that I will get too much medical care.
In life-or-death situations, which one do you prefer?	☐ Try every medical treatment to keep me alive longer, even if it is uncomfortable.	☐ Focus on my comfort, even if it may mean a shorter life.
At the end of life, which one do you prefer?	☐ I prefer to be in a hospital or nursing home.	☐ I strongly prefer to be at home.
If you can't make your own decisions, what do you want your healthcare agent to do?	☐ Follow my choices exactly, even if it is hard for loved ones.	☐ Do what brings loved ones the most peace, even if it is a little different.

Other things I want my care team and family to know:

_____

_____

Step 2: Talk to the People Who Matter

We often think loved ones know what we want, but they may not. An open conversation is the best way to help everyone understand your wishes.

- Who do you want to talk to? A spouse, adult child, parent, close friend, chosen family member, faith leader, doctor, nurse, or social worker.
- When is a good time? **Do not wait for an emergency to start these discussions.**

Easy ways to start

- I need your help with something important.
- Can we talk about how I want to be cared for in the future?
- I am doing well right now, but I want to be ready. Can we talk about what matters to me?
- I filled out a guide about my health care wishes, and I would like to share it with you.

Tips for your talk

- Practice first by writing down your thoughts
- Take it slow. A few short talks over time can work better than one long conversation
- Be patient. Some people may feel nervous or emotional
- Remember that you can change your mind as life changes

Words I want to use to start the conversation:

_____

Step 3: Keep the Conversation Going

After you start, keep talking. Share your wishes with other people who may be involved in your care.

Good times to check in

- During family visits or holidays
- Before a big trip
- After a new diagnosis or change in health
- When your feelings, values, or care goals change

Step 4: What to Do Next: Advance Directives

It is a good idea to put your choices in writing using a legal form. This form is called an **advance directive**. There are different types of advance directives that can be combined:

1. **Health Care Proxy:** Allows you to choose someone you trust to make health care decisions for you if you become unable to make decisions for yourself.
2. **Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST)** Allows you or your decision maker to make your preferences known regarding common medical orders/life-sustaining treatments (CPR, intubation, feeding tubes, antibiotics, intravenous fluids, dialysis). The MOLST form must be completed with a medical provider.
3. **Living Will:** A legal document in which you provide written instructions about the medical care you want or do not want to receive.

A note about Organ Donation: if you decide to be an organ donor it is important to inform your family and health care proxy. Please see Appendix C.

Sharing Your Choices

1. **Find your forms:** In the United States, you can download the free legal forms for your state at **nhpco.org/advancedirective**.
2. **Tell your family:** Make sure your whole family knows who you chose to speak for you, so there are no surprises.
3. **Give out copies:** Give a copy of your completed form to your advocate, your family, and your doctors.

If You Do Not Have a Health Care Proxy

Think of the **Family Health Care Decisions Act (FHCDA)** as New York State's medical "back-up."

If you get seriously ill or injured and cannot speak for yourself, **this law allows your family or close friends to make medical decisions for you.**

Here is the simple breakdown of how it protects you:

1. Who gets to speak for you?

If you can't make your own decisions and haven't chosen a spokesperson (health care agent) ahead of time, the law automatically looks to your loved ones, known as a surrogate, in this specific order:

1. Your spouse or domestic partner
2. Your adult children (all children have the right to participate in making decisions for you)
3. Your parents
4. Your adult brothers or sisters (all siblings have the right to participate in making decisions for you)
5. A close friend / extended family members

2. What can they decide?

Your chosen family member can make almost any medical decision a doctor requires. This includes agreeing to surgeries, choosing medicines, or in severe cases deciding whether to stop life support if there is no hope of recovery.

This law is a great backup plan so your family doesn't have to go to court just to help you. However, the best way to stay in control is to fill out a **Health Care Proxy** form *before* you ever get sick. That way, you get to hand-pick exactly who speaks for you.

New York State Department of Health: https://www.health.ny.gov/community/advance_care_planning/

My Advance Care Planning Checklist

☐ I thought about what matters most to me.

☐ I wrote down my biggest worries and goals

☐ I chose a Health Care Proxy

☐ I chose a backup Health Care Proxy

☐ I talked with my loved ones about my wishes

☐ I shared my wishes with my doctor, nurse, or social worker

☐ I completed or plan to complete an advance directive form

☐ I gave copies to the people who need them

Questions I want to ask my care team:

For legal forms, patients can ask their care team or visit a trusted state resource for advance directive forms. This booklet is educational and does not replace medical or legal advice.

Appendix A

Health Care Proxy Form

Official New York State Health Care Proxy Form

Link to form https://tinyurl.com/HealthCareProxyNY

Source: New York State Department of Health

Appendix B

Official New York State MOLST Form

New York State Department of Health
Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST)
Form DOH-5003

Link to form: https://tinyurl.com/MOLSTNEWYORK

Source: New York State Department of Health

Patient Education Notice: This appendix is provided for educational purposes and access to the official New York State MOLST form. It does not replace individualized medical or legal guidance. Patients and families should discuss MOLST decisions with the appropriate health care professional.

Appendix C

New York State Donate Life Registry

Phone Number: 1-866-NY-DONOR (1-866-693-6667)

Website: New York State Donate Life Registry