

## What if I Choose Not to Have a Health Care Directive?

The decision whether or not to make a Health Care Directive is up to you. If you become ill and incapable of making health care decisions and have not prepared a Directive, another person may still make decisions for you.

If you have appointed a Proxy they will have the authority to make decisions based on their understanding of what you would have wanted for your care. If you DO NOT appoint a proxy the decision maker will be your nearest family member, beginning with your spouse, eldest child, etc.

## Changing a Health Care Directive

You may change or revoke your Health Care Directive at any time, either verbally or in writing, by destroying the Directive, or by making a new Directive. It is wise to destroy Directives that are no longer in effect, to avoid confusion. It is also important to inform your family, proxy and physician that you have changed your Directive.

## Once Your Health Care Directive is Completed

You should share your Health Care Directive with your family, proxy, physician, and other health care providers. A Health Care Directive is most effective when family and care providers are aware of it.

**For More Information on Health Care Directives, contact your physician, or the Client Care Coordinator in the location closest to your home community.**

### HOME CARE EAST

**Davidson & surrounding area: 567-2302**  
**Outlook & surrounding area: 867-8676 ext. 411**  
**Kyle, Beechy, Lucky Lake**  
**& surrounding area: 375-2400 ext. 2**  
**Rosetown & surrounding area: 882-2672 ext. 2205**  
**Biggar & surrounding area: 948-3323 ext. 2745**

### HOME CARE WEST

**Kerrobert & surrounding area: 834-2646 ext. 2817**  
**Kindersley & surrounding area: 463-1000 ext. 2568**  
**Eatonia & surrounding area: 967-2985**  
**Eston & surrounding area: 962-3667 ext. 243**  
**Unity & surrounding area: 228-2666 ext. 2992**  
**Wilkie & surrounding area: 843-2644, ext 259**  
**Macklin & surrounding area: 753-3205**

# HEARTLAND HEALTH REGION

## Health Care Directives



## What You Should Know



*Quality at work in pursuit of excellence*



HEARTLAND HEALTH REGION  
*Healthy People, Healthy Communities,  
and Service Excellence in an  
Enduring Health System*

## What is a Health Care Directive?

A **Health Care Directive**, sometimes called a 'Living Will', tells others how you would like to be treated if you lose your ability to make decisions about your health care. Your Health Care Directive contains instructions about your choices of medical treatment. You prepare the directive in advance, looking ahead to a time when you may no longer be able to make health care decisions for yourself.

*Remember, your Health Care Directive takes effect only when you become incapable of making or communicating your health care decisions.*

## Who Can Make a Health Care Directive?

In Saskatchewan, you must be at least 16 years of age and *capable* of making health care decisions.

Health Care Directives are sanctioned by provincial legislation in Saskatchewan. The law is called the **Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act (1997)**.

Your Health Care Directive gives you the chance to tell health care providers what type of care you believe will be most appropriate for you if you should develop a life threatening condition and you are not able to express your wishes.

When developing a Health Care Directive it is important to be as specific as possible.

It is also important that your family, Substitute Health Care Decision Maker (Proxy) and physician are aware of your wishes and have a copy

*It is always a good idea to discuss your plans for a health care directive with your family and with your physician.*

of the most up to date Directive.

Take the time to review and discuss the "Information Sheet for Planning your Health Care Directive". This form is available for your use and explores questions that should be considered when writing a Health Care Directive.

The more information and detail you can put into writing, the clearer your wishes will be understood by those making the decisions when you are no longer able to do so.

It is also important to have conversations and discussions about your wishes as often not all situations can be anticipated ahead of time. The more information you can share with those who will be making the decisions, the better able they will be to anticipate what YOUR decision would have been regarding YOUR care.



## Appointing a Substitute Health Care Decision Maker (Proxy)

A person you name to make health care decisions on your behalf when you are not able to is called a **Substitute Health Care Decision Maker or a Proxy** or You may name one or more persons as Substitute Health Care Decision Maker or Proxy.

*Many people believe the appointment of a trusted Proxy is the most effective and reliable way to ensure that their wishes are followed if they are not able to give direction themselves.*

If you choose more than one Proxy, you may direct them to act jointly - that is, together; or to act successively - that is, the first person named will be called upon to make decisions on your behalf. If the first person named cannot be found or is unable to make a decision, the second person named will be called upon, and so on.

You should make your Proxy aware of your expressed wishes and directions regarding health care decisions.

*A 'Power of Attorney' is not the same as a Proxy and a person appointed as Power of Attorney does not have the authority to make health care decisions for another person.*