

Medical Decision Making and Health Care Rights

For the Teens and Young Adults

Before the age of 18, your parents work with your healthcare team and make medical decisions for you. On your 18th birthday, you become an adult. As an adult, you will work with your healthcare team and be in charge of making decisions about your healthcare. As an adult, you will:

- Sign a **consent** for medical treatment. This consent gives your healthcare team the permission to care for you and share your health information, or **PHI**, with others who are involved in your healthcare.
- Decide if you want your family members or friends to know your health information. Your health information is protected and private under the **HIPPA** privacy rule. If you want your healthcare team to share your health information with your family members or friends, you will sign a **release of information**.
- Sign an **advanced directive** about your future care. If you are interested in information about advanced directives, ask your healthcare team, social worker, or chaplain.

For the Parents and Caregivers

On your teen's 18th birthday, they become an adult. As an adult, they will begin to work with their healthcare team and be in charge of making decisions about their healthcare. Your young adult will sign a **consent** for medical treatment and decide who their healthcare team to share their health information, or **PHI**, with.

Your young adult will also sign a **release of information**. This release lets the healthcare team know who they can share your young adult's health information with. Without your young adult's permission, Children's Health is not allowed to share your healthcare information with you.

Not all young adults will be able to make medical decisions for themselves. In these cases, assistance in decision making may be needed. Types of assistance can include: **medical power of attorney, guardianship, or supported decision making agreement**. Talk with your healthcare team or social worker if your teen will need assistance in decision making when they are an adult.

Helpful Terms to Know

o **Consent for treatment:**

- Giving your healthcare team permission to treat you.
- Giving your healthcare team permission to share your health information as needed for treatment purposes.
- Giving your healthcare team permission to share your health information with others.
- Acknowledging that you will be responsible for payment of the treatment provided.

o **PHI (Protected Health Information):** Information you provide to your healthcare team, or that is created or received about your healthcare. Examples of PHI can include your name, address, telephone number, email address, medical record number, and social security number.

o **HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996): Privacy Rule:** the HIPPA Privacy Rule requires your health care team to protect your health care records and other health information. The HIPPA Privacy Rule gives you as a patient, right over how your medical information is used and shared.

o **Release of information:** Giving your healthcare team permission to share your health information with your family or others.

o **Advanced Directives:** Legal documents that allow you to make decisions about treatment and end-of-life if you should become too ill or hurt to express your wishes.

o **Medical Power of Attorney:** This document gives the person who you choose (your agent) the legal power to make health care decisions for you. You can explain what your wishes are in the documents. Your agent can only make the decisions when you are not able to make them yourself.

o **Guardianship:** A person (guardian) appointed by a judge in a court case to be the supervisor or administrator for an incapacitated person (ward). The guardian makes decisions for the ward and reports to the court each year.

o **Supported Decision Making Agreement:** A disabled adult can execute this to name "supporter" to help them get information they need to make an informed decision, understand options/risks, and communicate the decision to others. The supporter does not make the decision for the adult. The disabled adult can end it at any time.