

Mental Health Advance Directives

Mental Health Advance Directives are a way of planning for your future mental health care in case you can no longer make mental health care decisions on your own as a result of illness. You can do this by creating a Mental Health Declaration or by appointing a Mental Health Power of Attorney or both.

A Mental Health Declaration is a set of written instructions that will tell your provider the following:

- what kind of treatment you prefer,
- where you would like to have your treatment take place,
- specific instructions you have about your mental health care treatment

A Mental Health Power of Attorney is a document that allows you to name a person, in writing, to make mental health care decisions for you if you are unable to make them on your own. Your Mental Health Power of Attorney will make decisions about your mental health care based on your written instructions.

If you would like to have a Mental Health Declaration or a Mental Health Power of Attorney or both, please contact an advocacy organization such as the Mental Health Association in Pennsylvania at 1-866-578-3659 or 717-346-0549; email: info@mhapa.org and they will provide you with the forms and answer any questions. It is important that you share your written Mental Health Advance Directives with your mental health care provider. If you do not share your Mental Health Advance Directives with your provider, he/she will not be able to follow them.

If you or your representative believe that your provider has not handled your Mental Health Advance Directives properly or if you have any other complaints about Mental Health Advance Directives, you can follow the standard complaint process which is explained in your Member Handbook.