

Advance Directives Timeline

(including work by Midwest Bioethics Center)

- 1967 Luis Kutner, a Chicago attorney, devises the original living will.
- 1968 Dr. Walter Sackett, a Florida legislator, introduces the first living will legislation. The bill does not pass.
- 1973 American Hospital Association promulgates a Patients' Bill of Rights. It includes the rights of informed consent and treatment refusal.
- 1976 In the case of Karen Quinlan, the New Jersey Supreme Court decides that a patient's wishes with respect to life-prolonging treatment take precedent over the state's duty to preserve life.
- 1976 California enacts the nation's first living will law.
- 1977 Seven more states enact living will laws.
- 1980 Kansas enacts a living will law.
- 1985 Missouri enacts a living will law.
- 1989 American Medical Association adopts a resolution authorizing physicians to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining treatment with the informed consent of the patient.
- 1989 Kansas enacts a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care Decisions law.
- 1989 Midwest Bioethics Center, the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association, and the Metropolitan Medical Society of Greater Kansas City jointly establish Kansas City's Advance Health Care Directives Community Project.
- 1990 Kansas City's Advance Health Care Directives Community Project publishes a Living Will document.
- 1990 In the case of Nancy Cruzan, the United States Supreme Court acknowledges that the Constitution protects a patient's right to refuse life-prolonging treatment. Interest in advance directives explodes.
- 1991 Missouri enacts a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care Decisions law.
- 1991 Kansas City's Advance Health Care Directives Community Project publishes a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care Decisions document.
- 1991 Congress passes the Federal Patient Self-Determination Act. The law requires health care providing organizations to adopt policies and practices designed to promote Advance Directives.
- 1991 American Hospital Association features Midwest Bioethics Center and Kansas City's Advance Health Care Directives Community Project in its national teleconference on the Patient Self-Determination Act.
- 1991 AARP volunteers trained by Midwest Bioethics Center conduct advance directive forums for more than 5,000 individuals in seven states.
- 1991 Midwest Bioethics Center releases *Living Choices*, a fifteen-minute advance directive video.

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- 1992 Midwest Bioethics Center and the Public Administrator's Office of Jackson County, Missouri, establish Project BRIDGE to help persons with serious mental illness, developmental disability, or cognitive impairment caused by illness, accident or aging to express their health care preferences and make advance directives.
- 1992 Kansas City's Advance Health Care Directives Community Project publishes a single one-page document containing both a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care Decisions form and a Health Care Treatment Directive form.
- 1992 Kansas Health Foundation engages Midwest Bioethics Center to establish a community advance directive project in Wichita, Kansas.
- 1992 Midwest Bioethics Center participates in the Annenberg Foundation's invitational meeting in Washington D.C. to produce a white paper focusing on communication strategies regarding the PSDA.
- 1995 Midwest Bioethics Center releases *Father Knows Best*, a fifteen-minute video case study about Advance Directives.
- 1995 The Robert Wood Johnson-funded SUPPORT study findings confirm that advance directive information is often unavailable when needed.
- 1997 Midwest Bioethics Center and the Institute for Human Development at the University of Missouri - Kansas City releases *Advance Directives: A Life Choice*, a 15-minute advance directive video for adults with mental retardation.

Today fifty States and the District of Columbia have laws authorizing the use of advance directives. (Forty-six States [including Kansas and Missouri] authorize both Living Wills and Durable Powers of Attorney for Health Care Decisions; one State authorizes only Living Wills; and three States authorize only Durable Powers of Attorney for Health Care Decisions).

Kansas City's Advance Health Care Directives Community Project has distributed nearly 2,000,000 advance directive documents and informational brochures. The documents are available in English and Spanish, in giant type and Braille.

By mobilizing more than 150 volunteer speakers, Kansas City's Advance Health Care Directives Community Project has made more than 1,000 community presentations, informing more than 50,000 English and Spanish speaking people throughout Kansas and Missouri about their right to refuse unwanted health care by making Advance Directives.

— This Timeline was compiled by Don Reynolds, JD.

Much of the information was provided by Choice in Dying.