

How to be prepared for a medical emergency

involving you or your family members

The following suggestions are based on an article in LifePath's *The Good Life* (by Wendy Iseman, December 26, 2020). This list contains documents and information that may prove valuable to your family or caregivers in the event that you are incapacitated with a medical condition. For further information about legal documents, please see online information and/or consult with a lawyer.

Keep your documents in a safe place

such as a metal file box, a file box or folder, or a binder that is labeled, and let your family and caregivers know where this is located.

Health Care Proxy

The Health Care Proxy is a simple document, legally valid in Massachusetts, which allows you to name someone (an "agent") to make health care decisions on your behalf if you are unable to make or communicate those decisions. This must be signed by two witnesses who are not being designated as the agent.

Health Care Directive or Advance Directive

Also known as a Personal Directive or Living Will, this document states your wishes regarding end-of-life medical care, including the treatments you do and do not want. This is not a legally binding document in Massachusetts, but it informs your Health Care Agent of your wishes.

Medical Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST)

MOLST is a medical order form that relays instructions between health professionals about a patient's care. MOLST is based on your preferences to accept or refuse medical treatment, including treatments that might extend life. The MOLST must be signed by your health care provider (physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant), with copies given to your health care professional and your health care agent.

Power of Attorney

This is a document used to grant someone the authority to act on your behalf, such as tending to your finances or maintaining property. This should be signed in the presence of a notary public or two witnesses, with an official copy given to your agent.

Health insurance information

List of doctors you see

and their contact information, with your emergency contact person listed

List of medications

and pharmacies used

Name of your legal counsel or estate lawyer

and contact information

List of relatives and close friends

with addresses, phone numbers and email addresses

Any other significant information

that may help your authorized representative act on your behalf