It can be helpful for your loved one to officially write down his or her wishes for medical care and/or whom they trust to act for them. This is called an advance directive. It can help state important decisions to avoid future stress.

Here are the most common types of advance directives:

- **Health Care Directive** (and/or “Living Will”): Documents one's medical wishes. In Missouri, it needs to be witnessed by two persons who are not related to you nor financially connected to you or your estate.

- **Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care:** In addition to documenting medical wishes, your loved one may want to appoint someone to speak on his or her behalf regarding health care choices, should they become physically or mentally unable to do so at some future point. This process is called appointing a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, and needs to be notarized.

- **Durable Power of Attorney for Financial Matters:** It is often advisable to seek the consultation of an attorney to appoint someone to assist with financial and legal matters before your loved one is physically or mentally unable to conduct his or her own affairs. If you do not have your own attorney, first seek recommendation from other family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, or your clergy.

Compliments of the Caregiver Class from BJC, hosted by BJC Hospice.

Contact us at 636-916-9830.