



**For Immediate Release:**

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**Pandemic Highlights Importance of Planning for Future Health Care Decisions**

(Vermont) – [National Healthcare Decisions Day](#), a day devoted to educating the public about the importance of advance care planning, is Friday, April 16. Though we at the Vermont Ethics Network spend all year stressing the importance of planning ahead for future health care decisions, we take this annual opportunity to make a public statement encouraging Vermonters to make their future health care wishes known. Once again, Governor Phil Scott has joined us in acknowledging the importance of advance care planning through a [Governor's Proclamation declaring April 11 through 17 Advance Directive Week in Vermont](#).

The past year has highlighted that there are no guarantees when it comes to our health. Unexpected situations happen that can leave us unable to speak for ourselves and communicate our health care preferences and priorities. Because of this, it is vital that everyone 18 years of age or older appoint a person (or people) who knows them well and can make health decisions for them should the need arise. Completing an advance directive and naming a health care agent is the best way to ensure that health care clinicians have access to the information they need to take care of you. During these uncertain times, there is peace of mind in knowing that the care and treatment you desire will align with the care and treatment that you receive.

**This is our shot, Vermont!** When you register for your COVID-19 vaccine this spring, consider completing an advance directive and naming a health care agent as well! Advance care planning is a gift to your family and to those closest to you. Unsure how to begin or what form to use? Check out these virtual events taking place during Vermont Advance Directive Week:

**No Crystal Ball: Advance Care Planning in Uncertain Times** (Free)

Tuesday, April 13, 6-7:30pm

Hosted by: The University of Vermont Medical Center HealthSource

**Planning for Future Health Care Needs** (Free)

Wednesday, April 14, 6-7pm

Hosted by: National Bank of Middlebury

**Advance Health Care Directives (2-Part Class)**

Monday, April 5 and Monday, April 12, 6-8pm

Hosted by: Access CVU

Cost: \$20 per person

You can also learn more by visiting the [Vermont Ethics Network website](#), which has free downloadable advance directive forms and a wealth of information about the tools available for medical decision making in Vermont, along with a dedicated page for [COVID-19 advance care planning considerations and resources](#).

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