

## CHECKLIST FOR ENSURING YOUR ADVANCE DIRECTIVES ARE KNOWN AND ACCESSIBLE

After doing the hard work of creating advance directives, it is absolutely vital that you make your documents known and accessible. There is no benefit to having an advance directive if no one knows that it exists or where it can be easily located.

For people with an advanced, progressive, life-limiting illness and an OOHDNR/POST, a copy of your medical order with signatures must be immediately accessible and producible in the event of a medical emergency.

After you have obtained the necessary witnesses and signatures on your advance directive documents, please take the following steps to ensure the accessibility and usefulness of your advance directives:

1. Make copies of your advance directives and/or medical orders. A POST form should be printed on pink paper, if possible.
2. Put the originals in a secure, fireproof location.
3. Keep one copy in an easily accessible location, that is known to your healthcare representative and your loved ones. In Putnam County, Indiana, you should keep them in your Vital Medical Information File, a bright red envelope that has a magnet and hangs on your refrigerator. All emergency responders in Putnam County know to look for this bright red envelope on a person's refrigerator.
4. Provide copies to your healthcare representative and other appropriate individuals (i.e., physicians, loved ones, clergy, attorney, etc.).
5. Discuss the details of your advance directive with these individuals.
6. Ask your physician to make your advance directive a part of your permanent medical record.
7. Whenever you go on a trip, to the doctor, or to the hospital, take copies with you. You may want to ask your family and healthcare representatives to carry copies with them at all times. Consider keeping a copy in your wallet or purse, along with the contact information for your healthcare representative.
8. As an alternative, you may wish to consider putting a card in your wallet and/or glove box that states that you have an advance directive, identifies your healthcare representative, and provides his/her contact information.