



Darryl Fezell (center) talks over advance care planning with Northwest Kidney Centers social worker Claire Perry and Dr. Daniel Lam.

Important conversations: advance care planning

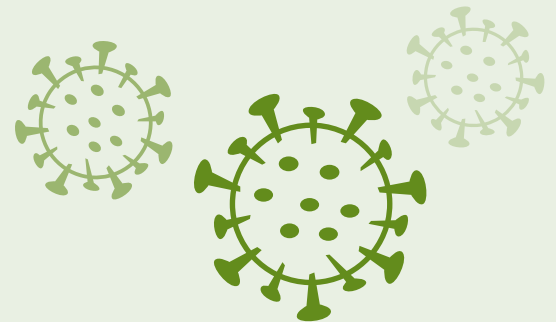
Advance care planning is a tool to make sure that your future wishes are carried out. You fill out forms that tell your family and care team what you would like to happen, especially if you should reach a point where you can't speak for yourself.

"I see it as making clear how you want to live before it's too late," said Darryl Fezell of Seattle, who recently spent time planning his health care journey.

Darryl assigned his friend, John, as his durable power of attorney. In conversations with his care team and John, Darryl outlined his wishes in case John needs to make decisions on his behalf.

"It's good knowing that there's someone there to walk you through it," Darryl said. "Believe it or not, just having the conversation helps. I can have those conversations and say what I need to have done."

Talk with your social worker to get started.



What you should know about the coronavirus

First, don't miss a treatment due to fears of coronavirus. We follow careful procedures to screen for and prevent infections in our clinics and are actively working with public health departments and the Centers for Disease Control.

Protect yourself and others:

- Wash hands frequently. Cover coughs and sneezes. Throw tissues in the trash.
- Disinfect objects you touch frequently with a household cleaning spray or a wipe.
- Tell us if you are sick or have been exposed to anyone with a connection to COVID-19.

Your safety, health and comfort are our highest priorities.



Darryl Fezell believes completing advance directives is a form of self-advocacy. "Patients have to be clear for themselves first of what they want," he says.

Advance directives: a closer look

Advance care planning involves having conversations with family and friends and completing advance directives, a collection of legal documents that state your future care wishes in case you are unable to speak for yourself.

A **durable power of attorney** is a legal document that states who can decide what medical care you receive. Name someone you trust who understands your wishes. The durable power of attorney form must be signed by two witnesses or, preferably, be notarized. Your social worker can refer you to a notary.

A **living will** specifies the end-of-life care you'll receive when there is no chance you can get better.

A **Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST)** form states what to do if your heart stops or if you stop breathing. Northwest Kidney Centers requires that your doctor sign your POLST form.

After you complete the advance directive forms, talk with your family, friends, doctor and care team so they understand your wishes. You can always cancel or change advance directives. If you make changes, be sure everyone gets new copies and discards old forms.

Get more involved in your care plan

You're invited to join in when your Northwest Kidney Centers care team meets to talk about goals for your personal kidney treatment and the timetable to reach the goals. You'll get written notice of the regularly scheduled plan of care meetings. You can join the discussion in person or by phone with your doctor, nurse, social worker and dietitian. You can also invite a family member or friend.

Plan of care meetings usually last about 20 minutes and can cover your lab results, how you feel on dialysis, options for transplant or home dialysis, and life outside of dialysis.

At your care plan meetings:



- Speak up. Your voice matters.
- Ask if something is not clear.
- Ask for help if you need it.
- Work with the team to get where you want to be.
- If you want to talk to someone on the team after the meeting, let them know.

Timing matters when you plan a getaway

Talk with your unit coordinator or social worker at least a month before you want to travel. The earlier the better as some trips take more than a month to plan.

Whether you dialyze in a clinic or at home, you'll want to enlist your care team to help you be sure that nothing has been overlooked, such as dialysis plans at your destination and any supplies you will need.

Hand washing, the best defense

Whether it's coronavirus, the flu or the common cold: the single best way to avoid spreading infections is to wash your hands with soap and water.



Karlien Greeff keeps germs at bay at her home in Redmond.



Tips for the drive-thru window

Fast food tends to be high in salt and can make you thirsty. Watching your salty food intake can lower your fluid gains. When you eat fast food, limit salty foods for the rest of the day and don't forget your phosphorus binders.

- Ask for part or all of your meal to be unsalted. It's worth asking, though not always possible.
- Order a small serving of unsalted French fries.
- Skip pickles and use single packets of ketchup and mustard.
- Order small beverages with extra ice. Your drinks will last longer, and you won't drink as fast.
- Order a children's meal; it's usually about right in sodium and potassium.
- Choose broiled, steamed or grilled foods instead of deep fried.
- Remove the skin from fried items to reduce fat and salt.
- Ask for the nutritional information of menu items. Limit yourself to 1,500 milligrams of salt a day.

The healthier choice is to skip fast food in the first place. Avoid the temptation by eating before you leave home or take a healthy snack with you.

Northwest Kidney Centers promotes the optimal health, quality of life and independence of people with kidney disease through patient care, education and research.



www.nwkidney.org
communications@nwkidney.org

Northwest Kidney Centers: 206-292-2771

Home hemodialysis unit: 206-292-2558 or 1-877-216-2558

Peritoneal dialysis unit: 206-292-2285 or 1-877-292-2285

National Healthcare Decisions Day is April 16

Look for advance care planning resources and activities in your clinic during April. Talk with your social worker about your plan for National Healthcare Decisions Day.



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Bring your medicine list on lab draw days

Does your list of the medicines you take match the list Northwest Kidney Centers keeps? Does your doctor's list match as well? It's important to get everyone who plays a role in your care on the same page.

Each month on lab draw day, bring a list of the medicines you take to your dialysis clinic, so staff can compare your list to ours. They'll also compare the list to what your doctor has on file.

If you get your medicines through the Northwest Kidney Centers pharmacy, you can get a printed list of your medicines there.



Our pharmacists such as Lisette Shields can give you a list of your medicines if you get them through our specialized pharmacy.