

NHDD Sample Support Letter



National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) is April 16

One way to celebrate it is to encourage your local municipality to declare April 16 as Healthcare Decisions Day through a proclamation. Below is suggested language you can copy and paste to create your own support letter that accompanies suggested proclamation text.

Sample Support Letter

<address>

<date>

Dear <title and name>:

On behalf of the <insert organization name(s)>, we are writing to request a proclamation this year for *Healthcare Decisions Day*, <insert day of week>, April 16. The day is designed to inspire, educate and empower the public and providers about the importance of advance care planning.

In 2014, the Bree Collaborative highlighted WSHA and WSMA's joint initiative, Honoring Choices Pacific Northwest (PNW), as a quality, standardized program for advance care planning in its End Of Life Care Report and Recommendations. Since then, Honoring Choices PNW has continued to inspire health care and community organizations, as well as individual Washingtonians, to have conversations about the care people want to receive at the end of life.

Partnering with Honoring Choices PNW, we have been working locally to ensure opportunity and access for advance care planning. To date we have:

- <insert accomplishment>
- <insert accomplishment>
- <insert accomplishment>

We are proud of these achievements, but greater awareness is still needed.

To that end, **we respectfully request you make a proclamation highlighting Healthcare Decisions Day**, as part of a statewide and national effort to encourage physicians and their care teams, medical groups, hospitals and health systems, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, continuing care retirement communities, hospices and a wide range of grassroots community organizations to participate in a statewide effort to provide clear and consistent information to the public about advance care planning.

Thank you for your ongoing support of advance care planning and bettering health care. With your continued enthusiasm, Washington will continue to advance toward the goal of being a state where everyone receives care that honors personal values and goals at the end of life.

Respectfully,

<signature>

<name, title>

NHDD Sample Proclamation

It's appropriate and appreciated to provide sample proclamation language with your request letter.



Sample Proclamation Language

Healthcare Decisions Day Proclamation

WHEREAS, *Healthcare Decisions Day* is designed to inspire, educate, and empower the public and providers about the importance of advance care planning; and

WHEREAS, health care and community organizations across Washington state are assisting people to plan for future health care decisions in the event they are unable to make their own medical decisions and to encourage the use of advance directives to communicate these important health care decisions; and

WHEREAS, in Washington state, RCW 11.125.400 allows individuals to name a durable power of attorney for health care and RCW 70.122.030 provides the specifics for a health care directive, offering a model form for patient use; and

WHEREAS, only 24 percent of people in Washington state have executed an advance directive; moreover, it is estimated that less than 50 percent of severely or terminally ill patients have an advance directive; and

WHEREAS, it is likely that a significant reason for these low percentages is that there is both a lack of knowledge and considerable confusion in the public about advance care planning and advance directives; and

WHEREAS, one of the principal goals of *Healthcare Decisions Day* is to encourage physicians and their care teams, medical groups, hospitals and health systems, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, continuing care retirement communities, hospices and community organizations to participate in a statewide effort to provide clear and consistent information to the public about advance care planning; and

WHEREAS, <insert organization name(s)> with Honoring Choices Pacific Northwest, a joint initiative of the Washington State Hospital Association and the Washington State Medical Association, and other health care organizations and community groups throughout Washington state have endorsed this event and are committed to educating the public about the importance of discussing health care choices and executing advance directives; and

WHEREAS, as a result of April 16, 2019 being recognized as *Healthcare Decisions Day* in <insert city/community>, more citizens will have conversations about their health care decisions; more citizens will execute advance directives to make their wishes known; and fewer families and health care providers will have to struggle with making difficult health care decisions in the absence of guidance from the patient;

NOW, THEREFORE, I/We, <insert official's or group's name>, do hereby recognize April 16, <insert year>, as *Healthcare Decisions Day* in <insert city/community> and call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.