

Selecting an Agent for Medical Decisions

Criteria to Consider

Compare two or three people you are considering as your healthcare agent. Put a checkmark in the box if the person has the skill listed. Tally them at the bottom to determine which person is the best candidate (on paper, at least). You may feel particularly strongly about one category over another, so the total may not reflect your final decision, but this list will help you compare and contrast the strengths of each candidate.

	Person #1	Person #2	Person #3
1. Would speak on your behalf			
2. Would act on <i>your</i> wishes (i.e. can separate own feelings from yours)			
3. Lives nearby or could travel to be at your side if needed			
4. Is expected to be available long into the future			
5. Has the capacity to handle the responsibility			
6. Will talk with you now about sensitive issues			
7. Would be able to make your needs a priority when necessary			
8. Could handle conflicts between family members or friends			
9. Could be a vocal advocate in a healthcare setting			
TOTALS			

This document was inspired by a worksheet adapted by the American Bar Association's Commission on Law and Aging from R. Pearlman, et. al., *Your Life Your Choices – Planning for Future Medical Decisions: How to Prepare a Personalized Living Will*, Veterans Administration Medical Center, Seattle, Washington.