National Healthcare Decisions Day: A Time to Plan

April 6, 2011

While the first two weeks of April are in the minds of many only about income taxes, National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) is intended to add to the conversation and encourage individuals to think and talk about their future healthcare decisions. Held every year on April 16, NHDD raises public awareness of the need for advance care planning. Advance care planning, through advance directives, comes in two main forms:

- A healthcare power of attorney that documents an individual’s choice to make healthcare decisions if the individual is not able to make decisions.
- A living will that documents the individual’s choice concerning end of life medical treatments.

Talking about healthcare and end-of-life issues can be uncomfortable, but all adults can benefit from planning for their healthcare choices if they are unable to speak for themselves.

The NHDD website provides resources to help guide these conversations, links to state specific forms for planning, and lists of events around the country that encourage advance care planning.

In a time when everyone is focused on finances, NHDD encourages everyone to think about other important planning matters. On April 16, 2011, take the time to talk to your family, loved-ones, and advisors about some of the most important questions you face in your own planning.

This nationwide advance directives educational event was founded and is chaired by McGuireWoods partner Nathan Kottkamp.

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