

## Helping Seniors and Caregivers with Health Care Decisions

When a loved one is having a medical crisis, it may be necessary for family members to step in and make important health care decisions. Yet frequently, families learn they do not have the legal authority to do so.

“Loved ones are often shocked to learn that they do not automatically have a right to make medical decisions on behalf of family, not even spouses,” says Catheryn Koss, executive director of the Senior Law Resource Center.

Thanks to recent Great Grants from the Hospice Foundation of Oklahoma Affiliated Fund at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, the Senior Law Resource Center is helping more Oklahomans complete an advance directive for health care, an important document that allows an adult to designate individuals to make medical decisions on their behalf. Advance directives also provide the opportunity to indicate what types of life-sustaining treatment you wish to receive in the event of a medical emergency.

With this additional funding, the Senior Law Resource Center has educated thousands of seniors, medical professionals and caregivers through free publications that provide legal information about end-of-life issues.

“I’ve been a medical social worker for 25 years, working with patients and families at the end of life,” says Linda Edmondson, LCSW. “The booklets produced by the Senior Law Resource Center are the best resources I’ve seen to help Oklahoma families and health care professionals with advance care planning and making end-of-life decisions.”

The Senior Law Resource Center also offers training and counseling for health care professionals, attorneys and social workers to provide them with the knowledge and resources to help their clients with health care planning. Through this project, more than 350 Oklahomans have received one-on-one assistance completing advance directive forms.

“Our hope is that by providing the community with information and guidance, we can ensure that patients’ wishes are honored,” says Koss.

“Thanks to these grants, we can enable loved ones to provide care for their family members when it is most needed.”

Established in 1998, the Hospice Foundation of Oklahoma Affiliated Fund is a permanent endowment fund at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation that supports palliative patient care issues in Oklahoma. To discuss how you can help your community, please contact us at 405/235-5603, email Jennifer Stewart at [j.stewart@occf.org](mailto:j.stewart@occf.org) or visit [www.occf.org](http://www.occf.org).



Oklahoma City University law student and Senior Law Resource Center volunteer James Perryman assists a client with completing her advance directive for health care.

# Helping Our Community

*Through a Great Grant.*

The Hospice Foundation of Oklahoma Affiliated Fund was created at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation to support and increase awareness of palliative and hospice care throughout Oklahoma. The permanent endowment fund recently awarded two Great Grants to the Senior Law Resource Center to support education about end-of-life decision making. Thanks to these grants, the Senior Law Resource Center has helped more than 350 Oklahomans complete advance directives for health care and has provided education to thousands of citizens, medical professionals and caregivers about incapacity planning.



The Oklahoma City Community Foundation offers a variety of fund options to help donors meet their philanthropic goals. To discuss how you can help your community, please contact us at 405/235-5603, email Jennifer Stewart at [j.stewart@occf.org](mailto:j.stewart@occf.org) or visit [www.occf.org](http://www.occf.org).



[www.facebook.com/occf.org](http://www.facebook.com/occf.org)



@occforg



[www.youtube.com/occforg](http://www.youtube.com/occforg)



**OKLAHOMA CITY  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

*Helping you help the community*

P.O. BOX 1146

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

73101-1146



NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK  
PERMIT NO. 255



Confirmed in Compliance with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations