

Part 2. Advance Instruction for Mental Health Treatment.

§ 122C-71. Purpose.

(a) The General Assembly recognizes as a matter of public policy the fundamental right of an individual to control the decisions relating to the individual's mental health care.

(b) The purpose of this Part is to establish an additional, nonexclusive method for an individual to exercise the right to consent to or refuse mental health treatment when the individual lacks sufficient understanding or capacity to make or communicate mental health treatment decisions.

(c) This Part is intended and shall be construed to be consistent with the provisions of Article 3 of Chapter 32A of the General Statutes, provided that in the event of a conflict between the provisions of this Part and Article 3 of Chapter 32A, the provisions of this Part control. (1997-442, s. 2; 1998-198, s. 2.)

§ 122C-72. Definitions.

As used in this Part, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the following terms have the meanings specified:

- (1) "Advance instruction for mental health treatment" or "advance instruction" means a written instrument, signed in the presence of two qualified witnesses who believe the principal to be of sound mind at the time of the signing, and acknowledged before a notary public, pursuant to which the principal makes a declaration of instructions, information, and preferences regarding the principal's mental health treatment and states that the principal is aware that the advance instruction authorizes a mental health treatment provider to act according to the instruction. It may also state the principal's instructions regarding, but not limited to, consent to or refusal of mental health treatment when the principal is incapable.
- (2) "Attending physician" means the physician who has primary responsibility for the care and treatment of the principal.
- (3) Repealed by Session Laws 1998-198, s. 2.
- (4) "Incapable" means that, in the opinion of a physician or eligible psychologist, the person currently lacks sufficient understanding or capacity to make and communicate mental health treatment decisions. As used in this Part, the term "eligible psychologist" has the meaning given in G.S. 122C-3(13d).
- (5) "Mental health treatment" means the process of providing for the physical, emotional, psychological, and social needs of the principal for the principal's mental illness. "Mental health treatment" includes, but is not limited to, electroconvulsive treatment (ECT), commonly referred to as "shock treatment", treatment of mental illness with psychotropic medication, and

admission to and retention in a facility for care or treatment of mental illness.

- (6) "Principal" means the person making the advance instruction.
- (7) "Qualified witness" means a witness who affirms that the principal is personally known to the witness, that the principal signed or acknowledged the principal's signature on the advance instruction in the presence of the witness, that the witness believes the principal to be of sound mind and not to be under duress, fraud, or undue influence, and that the witness is not:
 - a. The attending physician or mental health service provider or an employee of the physician or mental health treatment provider;
 - b. An owner, operator, or employee of an owner or operator of a health care facility in which the principal is a patient or resident; or
 - c. Related within the third degree to the principal or to the principal's spouse. (1997-442, s. 2; 1998-198, s. 2.)

§ 122C-73. Scope, use, and authority of advance instruction for mental health treatment.

(a) Any adult of sound mind may make an advance instruction regarding mental health treatment. The advance instruction may include consent to or refusal of mental health treatment.

(b) An advance instruction may include, but is not limited to, the names and telephone numbers of individuals to be contacted in case of a mental health crisis, situations that may cause the principal to experience a mental health crisis, responses that may assist the principal to remain in the principal's home during a mental health crisis, the types of assistance that may help stabilize the principal if it becomes necessary to enter a facility, and medications that the principal is taking or has taken in the past and the effects of those medications.

(c) An individual shall not be required to execute or to refrain from executing an advance instruction as a condition for insurance coverage, as a condition for receiving mental or physical health services, as a condition for receiving privileges while in a facility, or as a condition of discharge from a facility.

(c1) A principal, through an advance instruction, may grant or withhold authority for mental health treatment, including, but not limited to, the use of psychotropic medication, electroconvulsive treatment, and admission to and retention in a facility for the care or treatment of mental illness.

(d) A principal may nominate, by advance instruction for mental health treatment, the guardian of the person of the principal if a guardianship proceeding is thereafter commenced. The court shall make its appointment in accordance with

the principal's most recent nomination in an unrevoked advance instruction for mental health treatment, except for good cause shown.

(e) If, following the execution of an advance instruction for mental health treatment, a court of competent jurisdiction appoints a guardian of the person of the principal, or a general guardian with powers over the person of the principal, the guardian shall follow the advance instruction consistent with G.S. 35A-1201(a)(5).

(f) An advance instruction for mental health treatment may be combined with a health care power of attorney or general power of attorney that is executed in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 32A of the General Statutes so long as each form shall be executed in accordance with its own statute. (1997-442, s. 2; 1998-198, s. 2.)

§ 122C-74. Effectiveness and duration; revocation.

(a) A validly executed advance instruction becomes effective upon its proper execution and remains valid unless revoked.

(b) The attending physician or other mental health treatment provider may consider valid and rely upon an advance instruction, or a copy of that advance instruction that is obtained from the Advance Health Care Directive Registry maintained by the Secretary of State pursuant to Article 21 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes, in the absence of actual knowledge of its revocation or invalidity.

(c) An attending physician or other mental health treatment provider may presume that a person who executed an advance instruction in accordance with this Part was of sound mind and acted voluntarily when he or she executed the advance instruction.

(d) An attending physician or other mental health treatment provider shall act in accordance with an advance instruction when the principal has been determined to be incapable. If a patient is incapable, an advance instruction executed in accordance with this Article is presumed to be valid.

(e) The attending physician or mental health treatment provider shall continue to obtain the principal's informed consent to all mental health treatment decisions when the principal is capable of providing informed consent or refusal, as required by G.S. 122C-57. Unless the principal is deemed incapable by the attending physician or eligible psychologist, the instructions of the principal at the time of treatment shall supersede the declarations expressed in the principal's advance instruction.

(f) The fact of a principal's having executed an advance instruction shall not be considered an indication of a principal's capacity to make or communicate mental health treatment decisions at such times as those decisions are required.

(g) Upon being presented with an advance instruction, an attending physician or other mental health treatment provider shall make the advance instruction a part of the principal's medical record. When acting under authority of

an advance instruction, an attending physician or other mental health treatment provider shall comply with the advance instruction unless:

- (1) Compliance, in the opinion of the attending physician or other mental health treatment provider, is not consistent with generally accepted community practice standards of treatment to benefit the principal;
- (2) Compliance is not consistent with the availability of treatments requested;
- (3) Compliance is not consistent with applicable law;
- (4) The principal is committed to a 24-hour facility pursuant to Article 5 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes, and treatment is authorized in compliance with G.S. 122C-57 and rules adopted pursuant to it; or
- (5) Compliance, in the opinion of the attending physician or other mental health treatment provider, is not consistent with appropriate treatment in case of an emergency endangering life or health.

In the event that one part of the advance instruction is unable to be followed because of one or more of the above, all other parts of the advance instruction shall nonetheless be followed.

(h) If the attending physician or other mental health treatment provider is unwilling at any time to comply with any part or parts of an advance instruction for one or more of the reasons set out in subdivisions (1) through (5) of subsection (g), the attending physician or other mental health care treatment provider shall promptly notify the principal and, if applicable, the health care agent and shall document the reason for not complying with the advance instruction and shall document the notification in the principal's medical record.

(i) An advance instruction does not limit any authority provided in Article 5 of G.S. 122C either to take a person into custody, or to admit, retain, or treat a person in a facility.

(j) An advance instruction may be revoked at any time by the principal so long as the principal is not incapable. The principal may exercise this right of revocation in any manner by which the principal is able to communicate an intent to revoke and by notifying the revocation to the treating physician or other mental health treatment provider. The attending physician or other mental health treatment provider shall note the revocation as part of the principal's medical record. (1997-442, s. 2; 1998-198, s. 2; 2001-455, s. 5; 2001-513, s. 30(b).)

§ 122C-75. Reliance on advance instruction for mental health treatment.

(a) An attending physician or eligible psychologist who in good faith determines that the principal is or is not incapable for the purpose of deciding whether to proceed or not to proceed according to an advance instruction, is not

subject to criminal prosecution, civil liability, or professional disciplinary action for making and acting upon that determination.

(b) In the absence of actual knowledge of the revocation of an advance instruction, no attending physician or other mental health treatment provider shall be subject to criminal prosecution or civil liability or be deemed to have engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of the provision of treatment to a principal in accordance with this Part unless the absence of actual knowledge resulted from the negligence of the attending physician or mental health treatment provider.

(c) An attending physician or mental health treatment provider who administers or does not administer mental health treatment according to and in good faith reliance upon the validity of an advance instruction is not subject to criminal prosecution, civil liability, or professional disciplinary action resulting from a subsequent finding of an advance instruction's invalidity.

(d) No attending physician or mental health treatment provider who administers or does not administer treatment under authorization obtained pursuant to this Part shall incur liability arising out of a claim to the extent that the claim is based on lack of informed consent or authorization for this action.

(e) This section shall not be construed as affecting or limiting any liability that arises out of a negligent act or omission in connection with the medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a principal under an advance instruction or that arises out of any deviation from reasonable medical standards. (1997-442, s. 2; 1998-198, s. 2.)

§ 122C-76. Penalty.

It is a Class 2 misdemeanor for a person, without authorization of the principal, willfully to alter, forge, conceal, or destroy an instrument, the reinstatement or revocation of an instrument, or any other evidence or document reflecting the principal's desires and interests, with the intent or effect of affecting a mental health treatment decision. (1997-442, s. 2.)

§ 122C-77. Statutory form for advance instruction for mental health treatment.

(a) This Part shall not be construed to invalidate an advance instruction for mental health treatment that was executed prior to January 1, 1999, and was otherwise valid.

(b) The use of the following or similar form after the effective date of this Part in the creation of an advance instruction for mental health treatment is lawful, and, when used, it shall specifically meet the requirements and be construed in accordance with the provisions of this Part.

"ADVANCE INSTRUCTION FOR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

I, _____, being an adult of sound mind, willfully and voluntarily make this advance instruction for mental health treatment to be followed if it is determined by a physician or eligible psychologist that my ability to receive and evaluate information effectively or communicate decisions is impaired to such an extent that I lack the capacity to refuse or consent to mental health treatment. "Mental health treatment" means the process of providing for the physical, emotional, psychological, and social needs of the principal. "Mental health treatment" includes electroconvulsive treatment (ECT), commonly referred to as "shock treatment", treatment of mental illness with psychotropic medication, and admission to and retention in a facility for care or treatment of mental illness. I understand that under G.S. 122C-57, other than for specific exceptions stated there, mental health treatment may not be administered without my express and informed written consent or, if I am incapable of giving my informed consent, the express and informed consent of my legally responsible person, my health care agent named pursuant to a valid health care power of attorney, or my consent expressed in this advance instruction for mental health treatment. I understand that I may become incapable of giving or withholding informed consent for mental health treatment due to the symptoms of a diagnosed mental disorder. These symptoms may include:

PSYCHOACTIVE MEDICATIONS

If I become incapable of giving or withholding informed consent for mental health treatment, my instructions regarding psychoactive medications are as follows:
(Place initials beside choice.)

_____ I consent to the administration of the following medications:

_____ I do not consent to the administration of the following medications:

Conditions or
limitations: _____

ADMISSION TO AND RETENTION IN FACILITY

If I become incapable of giving or withholding informed consent for mental health treatment, my instructions regarding admission to and retention in a health care facility for mental health treatment are as follows: (Place initials beside choice.)

_____ I consent to being admitted to a health care facility for mental health treatment.

My facility preference is _____

_____ I do not consent to being admitted to a health care facility for mental health treatment.

This advance instruction cannot, by law, provide consent to retain me in a facility for more than 10 days.

Conditions or limitations _____

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions shall apply during the entire length of my incapacity.

In case of mental health crisis, please contact:

1.

Name: _____

Home

Address: _____

Home Telephone

Number: _____

Work Telephone

Number: _____

Relationship to

Me: _____

2.

Name: _____

Home

Address: _____

Home Telephone

Number: _____

Work Telephone

Number: _____

Relationship to

Me: _____

3. My Physician:

Name: _____

Telephone

Number: _____

4. My Therapist:

Name: _____

Telephone

Number: _____

The following may cause me to experience a mental health crisis:

The following may help me avoid a hospitalization: _____

I generally react to being hospitalized as follows: _____

Staff of the hospital or crisis unit can help me by doing the following:

I give permission for the following person or people to visit me:

Instructions concerning any other medical interventions, such as electroconvulsive (ECT) treatment (commonly referred to as "shock treatment"):

Other instructions: _____

_____ I have attached an additional sheet of instructions to be followed and considered part of this advance instruction.

SHARING OF INFORMATION BY PROVIDERS

I understand that the information in this document may be shared by my mental health treatment provider with any other mental health treatment provider who may serve me when necessary to provide treatment in accordance with this advance instruction.

Other instructions about sharing of information:

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL

By signing here, I indicate that I am mentally alert and competent, fully informed as to the contents of this document, and understand the full impact of having made this advance instruction for mental health treatment.

Signature of Principal

Date

NATURE OF WITNESSES

I hereby state that the principal is personally known to me, that the principal signed or acknowledged the principal's signature on this advance instruction for

mental health treatment in my presence, that the principal appears to be of sound mind and not under duress, fraud, or undue influence, and that I am not:

- a. The attending physician or mental health service provider or an employee of the physician or mental health treatment provider;
- b. An owner, operator, or employee of an owner or operator of a health care facility in which the principal is a patient or resident;
or
- c. Related within the third degree to the principal or to the principal's spouse.

AFFIRMATION OF WITNESSES

We affirm that the principal is personally known to us, that the principal signed or acknowledged the principal's signature on this advance instruction for mental health treatment in our presence, that the principal appears to be of sound mind and not under duress, fraud, or undue influence, and that neither of us is:

A person appointed as an attorney-in-fact by this document;

The principal's attending physician or mental health service provider or a relative of the physician or provider;

The owner, operator, or relative of an owner or operator of a facility in which the principal is a patient or resident; or

A person related to the principal by blood, marriage, or adoption.

Witnessed by:

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF _____

CERTIFICATION OF NOTARY PUBLIC

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF _____

I, _____, a Notary Public for the County cited above in the State of North Carolina, hereby certify that _____ appeared before me and swore or affirmed to me and to the witnesses in my presence that this instrument is an advance instruction for mental health treatment, and that he/she willingly and voluntarily made and executed it as his/her free act and deed for the purposes expressed in it.

I further certify that _____ and _____, witnesses, appeared before me and swore or affirmed that they witnessed _____ sign the attached advance instruction for mental

health treatment, believing him/her to be of sound mind; and also swore that at the time they witnessed the signing they were not (i) the attending physician or mental health treatment provider or an employee of the physician or mental health treatment provider and (ii) they were not an owner, operator, or employee of an owner or operator of a health care facility in which the principal is a patient or resident, and (iii) they were not related within the third degree to the principal or to the principal's spouse. I further certify that I am satisfied as to the genuineness and due execution of the instrument.

This is the _____ day
of _____,

Notary Public

My Commission expires:

NOTICE TO PERSON MAKING AN INSTRUCTION FOR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

This is an important legal document. It creates an instruction for mental health treatment. Before signing this document you should know these important facts: This document allows you to make decisions in advance about certain types of mental health treatment. The instructions you include in this declaration will be followed if a physician or eligible psychologist determines that you are incapable of making and communicating treatment decisions. Otherwise you will be considered capable to give or withhold consent for the treatments. Your instructions may be overridden if you are being held in accordance with civil commitment law. Under the Health Care Power of Attorney you may also appoint a person as your health care agent to make treatment decisions for you if you become incapable. You have the right to revoke this document at any time you have not been determined to be incapable. **YOU MAY NOT REVOKE THIS ADVANCE INSTRUCTION WHEN YOU ARE FOUND INCAPABLE BY A PHYSICIAN OR OTHER AUTHORIZED MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT PROVIDER.** A revocation is effective when it is communicated to your attending physician or other provider. The physician or other provider shall note the revocation in your medical record. To be valid, this advance instruction must be signed by two qualified witnesses, personally known to you, who are present when you sign or acknowledge your signature. It must also be acknowledged before a notary public.

NOTICE TO PHYSICIAN OR OTHER MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT PROVIDER

Under North Carolina law, a person may use this advance instruction to provide consent for future mental health treatment if the person later becomes incapable of making those decisions. Under the Health Care Power of Attorney the person may also appoint a health care agent to make mental health treatment decisions for the person when incapable. A person is "incapable" when in the opinion of a physician or eligible psychologist the person currently lacks sufficient understanding or

capacity to make and communicate mental health treatment decisions. This document becomes effective upon its proper execution and remains valid unless revoked. Upon being presented with this advance instruction, the physician or other provider must make it a part of the person's medical record. The attending physician or other mental health treatment provider must act in accordance with the statements expressed in the advance instruction when the person is determined to be incapable, unless compliance is not consistent with G.S. 122C-74(g). The physician or other mental health treatment provider shall promptly notify the principal and, if applicable, the health care agent, and document noncompliance with any part of an advance instruction in the principal's medical record. The physician or other mental health treatment provider may rely upon the authority of a signed, witnessed, dated, and notarized advance instruction, as provided in G.S. 122C-75. (1997-442, s. 2; 1998-198, s. 2; 1998-217, s. 53(a)(5).)