

LETTER OF INTENT

What do future caregivers need to know to provide the best possible care for you in the event you become incapacitated to the point where you require assistance but cannot easily convey your wishes?

A Letter of Intent is not a legal document, however, it is an invaluable tool for caregivers and family members. As a guideline, use the following topics to write your letter.

Written by: _____

Date: _____

To Whom it May Concern:

General Information: Clothing sizes and preferred styles/fabrics; favorite colors; religious preference/ceremonies; personal statistical information such as place, date and time of birth, city and state where raised, military service (with a copy of your DD-214); list of special friends/relatives that you keep in contact with; daily activities/hobbies; favorite t.v. shows; favorite type of music, detailed funeral/burial instructions (which funeral home to call; where you want ashes scattered, etc.). Are you in possession of family history information (e.g., the family Bible); if so, what is to be done with it?

Medical Information: Preferred doctors, hospitals and other health facilities; prior illnesses/surgeries; date of last eye exam and prescription; hearing status; blood type and any special blood problems; teeth/dentures; preference for at-home care if desired; results of any genetic testing; childhood diseases; allergies; temperature preferences for indoors; tolerance to sun; regular hygiene practices (hair, nails, etc.); prescription medications, over the counter medications that have been useful (vitamins, dandruff shampoo, lotions, ointments); alternative health treatments; dietary requirements/preferences (what foods do you hate?).

Housing and Community: Suggestions by you for making your home “user friendly” in the event of physical incapacity; will you remain in your home “at all costs” or whatever is suitable; favorite possessions that need to be close by in any arrangement; favorite places to visit and utilize (restaurants, recreation, libraries, banks, etc.); clubs/organizations that you wish to maintain contact with.

Other: Do you always want a pet around? Instructions for the caring of the pet. If at-home care is needed do you prefer a male or a female attendant? Do you wish to participate in social activities as long as possible, or prefer to be a loner? Do you tolerate small children running around? Do you like plants and the perfumes they may give off? Are you a morning person or a night person? How does someone access any computer information?

End of Life Decisions: When is dying preferable to living? What is your definition of unbearable pain? If you no longer recognize your family members is that end of life for you, or, if you are completely demented but seem happy and content is that okay? If you run out of money for long term care do you expect your family to pay for your care?