



NEWS FOR PROFESSIONAL PROVIDERS ONLY (HIPAA 837P Claim Submitters)

NATIONAL HEALTHCARE DECISIONS DAY PUTS FOCUS ON ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

DESPITE AWARENESS, JUST 29% OF AMERICANS HAVE A LIVING WILL

In recent years, awareness about the importance of having a living will or advance directive has risen considerably. About 90 percent of Americans have heard of a living will and 71 percent have thought about their end-of-life preferences. But that knowledge has not translated to action. Consider that only 29 percent of Americans actually have a living will, according to statistics cited by the National Healthcare Decisions Day (www.nhdd.org).

This year, National Healthcare Decisions Day is April 16th.

Sponsored by more than 400 national, state and professional entities, including the American Medical Association and AARP, National Healthcare Decisions Day encourages people to make their future health care decisions known to family, friends and care providers and to complete an advance directive.

LEARN MORE AT NHDD.ORG

Visit the National Healthcare Decisions Day website to learn more about efforts to increase awareness and completion of advance directives.

HIGHMARK OFFERS ADVANCE CARE PLANNING TOOLS FOR MEMBERS AND PROVIDERS

Highmark encourages you to discuss advance care planning with our members and to educate them regarding how an advance directive can make difficult health care decisions easier for themselves and their family members. To assist you in this effort, Highmark offers a sample advance directive document online for your use, and your patients can download copies as well.

Consistent with Pennsylvania's Act 169 of 2006, the advance directive is located in Highmark's Geriatric Resource Binder, which is available on our online Provider Resource Center (accessible via NaviNet® or through the Providers tab at www.highmarkbcbs.com). Click on *Clinical Reference Materials* at left, and select *Geriatric Resource Binder*. To access the advance directive document, click on *Living Will and Healthcare Power of Attorney* in the binder's Advance Directives section.

This booklet educates members about advance care planning and includes frequently asked questions and answers; a four-page Advance Health Care Directive form; and detailed instructions to help patients who wish to complete the document.

The Advance Directives section of the binder also offers resources to support physician practices in discussing advance directives with patients and families, including an educational overview written by physicians, sample patient discussion strategies and a communication card featuring tips on talking with surrogate decision makers, delivering difficult news and helping patients and families set goals in the face of end-of-life issues.

The binder's Advance Directives section also offers providers a questionnaire and communication card that can be used when discussing advance care planning with patients.

INFORMATION ABOUT PENNSYLVANIA'S ACT 169 OF 2006

Physicians can find additional information about Pennsylvania's [advance directive law](#) — Act 169 of 2006 — on the Pennsylvania Medical Society's website.

REMINDER: HIGHMARK NOW REIMBURSES FOR NEW CPT CODES FOR ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

The American Medical Association recently created two Current Procedural Terminology® (CPT) codes — 99497 and 99498 — for practitioners to document when they discuss end-of-life issues with patients.

Although the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will not provide payment for these codes until at least 2016, Highmark now reimburses for them for both our commercial and Medicare Advantage products. Read the [latest issue of Provider News](#) to learn more.