



April 16th is National Healthcare Decisions Day.

Have you completed your Advance HealthCare Directive?

Who should have an Advance Healthcare Directive?

Everyone over age 18!

In Connecticut, Advance Healthcare Directives include:

- The living will and health care instructions
- The appointment of a health care representative

Completing an Advance Healthcare Directive allows you to:

- Provide your directions or express your preferences concerning health care for the time when you might not be able to speak for yourself.
- Appoint a healthcare representative to act on your behalf.
- Discuss wishes with your agent, loved ones, and your doctor.
- Give copies to your agent, loved ones and MD
- Periodically review and make any changes.

The key to effective advance care planning is talking with your loved ones and your healthcare provider. How do you communicate your deepest values and priorities related to quality of life? Who should you choose to be our agent? How do you talk with your doctor about our wishes regarding life sustaining treatment? It is important to think about the things that matter most to you in your life. There are many resources available on line to help answer these questions.

National Healthcare Decisions Day www.nhdd.org

State of Connecticut www.ct.gov/agingservices/lib/agingservices/pdf

For more information call Deborah Ringen MSN, RN-BC Faith Community Nurse at 860-767-0186 Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley.



April is Alcohol Awareness month

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. provides the following information to help promote awareness.

Drinking too much alcohol increases people's risk of injuries, violence, drowning, liver disease, and some types of cancer. This April during Alcohol Awareness Month, **Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley** encourages you to educate yourself and your loved ones about the dangers of drinking too much.

In **Connecticut** alone, 40% of driving accidents within the past year are due to drunk driving. To spread the word and prevent alcohol abuse, **Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley** is joining other organizations across the country to honor Alcohol Awareness Month.

If you are drinking too much, you can improve your health by cutting back or quitting. Here are some strategies to help you cut back or stop drinking:

- Limit your drinking to no more than 1 drink a day for women or 2 drinks a day for men.
- Keep track of how much you drink.
- Choose a day each week when you will not drink.
- Don't drink when you are upset.
- Avoid places where people drink a lot.
- Make a list of reasons not to drink.

If you are concerned about someone else's drinking, offer to help.

To find your local Alcoholics Anonymous go to <http://www.aa.org/> and type in your Zip code.