



You can fill out legal forms for your advanced directive. Filling in these forms is not difficult and can help create conversations with your family about end-of-life decisions. It is important to update these forms annually because your decisions may change.

Preparing an advanced directive is fitting with the Islamic perspective to planning for the future. You can learn more about an advanced directives by talking with your doctor or seeking these local resources for legal, or medical advice.

Key concepts from our needs assessment include that Imams and Doctors are only advisors and not deciders, the importance of advanced planning and that patients can choose to receive care or not. Conversations on planning with patients on end of life issues are important now more than ever.

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

Every soul will taste death.

Qur'an, Surah Al-Imran 3:185

The end of life is emphasized in the Quran, however there is not a clear definition to recognize death. In Islam, human awareness is a large component in this life.

Defining death is difficult. Modern medical treatments can keep the body breathing even when the brain is not working. The International Organization of Islamic Medicine stated,

"If it is scientifically certain that life cannot be restored, then it is futile to diligently keep the patient in a vegetative state by heroic means ... It is the process of life that the doctor aims to maintain and not the process of dying."

The Imam's role is to advise the individual and family. Imams often consult with physicians to give specific advice. You can seek religious support at your local mosque or by requesting a chaplain in the hospital.

The Prophet anticipated his end of life by making preparations, accepting his fate, and leaving this world in the most natural manner.

PREPARING FOR END OF LIFE DECISIONS IN ISLAM



SHIFA
COMMUNITY CLINIC

"Live in this world as if you were going to live forever; prepare for the next world as if you were going to die tomorrow."
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ)

END-OF-LIFE-CARE

It can be hard to think and talk about dying. For the benefit of ourselves and loved ones, discussing end-of-life-care prepares us for critical decisions. End of life care means the care provided to someone typically in the last months to weeks of life. In addition to medical care, such as pain management, end of life care includes comfort care such as psychological or spiritual support.



ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

For Muslims, the purpose of life is to worship Allah (swt). The end of life represents the divide into the next life, and for many is considered one of the most religious moments of a Muslim's life. Rulings and recommendations for end of life are referenced in the Quran, Sunnah, and scholarly work which can guide Muslims today.

SHARED VALUES

Islamic values are found in modern medicine. Knowing these values will help you make important decisions

- **You have the power!** You can choose to refuse or receive care. In Islam, it is not obligatory to receive care. However, it is sunnah (recommended) for Muslims to seek treatment since each person is entrusted by Allah with their body.

The Prophet (ﷺ) was asked: "Should we not treat sickness?" He replied: "Treat sickness, for God has not created any disease except that He has also created its cure."

- **The doctor looks out for your best interest.** Doctors balance the benefits of treatment against the risks to you.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said; "The best of you is the one who is most beneficial to others"

- **The doctor must treat each patient the same no matter who they are.** Islam holds justice as a virtue like doctors promise to do.



HOW TO MAKE SURE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD



Even when you cannot talk, your voice can be heard with an **advanced directive**, a collection of documents that tell doctors and family what you want. An advanced directive includes:

- Living Will
- Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order.
- Health Care Proxy

The living will describes how much end-of-life medical care you want to receive. The DNR communicates whether you wish to have cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). A health proxy is someone you choose who is willing to speak for you when you cannot.