

Supported Decision Making

When an individual turns 18 years old they automatically become a legal adult that is responsible for all decision making. If no measures are taken, the individual has complete control over their health information and decisions. Healthcare providers, payers, and educational institutions require consent each time before they can share information with family members. This is an appropriate option for many young adults, but some young adults with special needs may require additional supports. Below are options to support young adults in decision making, and are arranged in order from least restrictive to most restrictive.

Natural Supports: Informal assistance and guidance from family and friends without the ability to make decisions on behalf of the individual. The individual maintains control of all personal information, and chooses how and when to involve others.

Social Service Supports: Utilizing the person-centered planning process, providers explore and ensure that an individual is aware of adjunct supports which he/she may be eligible to receive from locally community-based organizations (e.g., Transportation, Home Health Aids, Peer Supports, Community Living Supports, etc.).

Authorization for release of information form: Allows health care providers, payers, or educational institutions to share information with designated people at the discretion of the individual. The individual determines the amount and type of information that can be shared, and with whom.

Patient advocate form: Provides legal authority to designated individuals to make medical decisions on behalf of the individual if the individual becomes unable to make their own decisions. Patient advocate forms can also indicate the wishes and decisions of the individual regarding life sustaining treatment.

Joint bank account: A bank account shared by two or more individuals that have equal authority to deposit and withdraw money. A joint bank account provides easy access to personal funds in the event of a health emergency.

Representative Payee through SSA: A person or an organization appointed by the Social Security or SSI benefits to assist an individual in the management of his/her benefits. A payee's main duties are to use the benefits to pay for the current and future needs of the beneficiary, and properly save any benefits not needed to meet current needs. A payee must also keep records of expenses and provide an accounting of how he/she used or saved the benefits.

Power of Attorney: A **Power of Attorney** (POA) is a written authorization to act on another's behalf in legal matters. The person creating a **Power of Attorney** is known as the "principal" and the person authorized to act is called the "agent."

1. **Financial Power of Attorney:** Allows the agent to act on the behalf of the principal regarding financial decisions
2. **Medical Power of Attorney:** Allows the agent to act on the behalf of the principal regarding medical decisions
3. **Durable Power of Attorney:** Allows the agent to act on the behalf of the principal regarding financial, medical, and legal decisions

Guardianship: A parent attempting to obtain court-appointed **guardianship** of an **adult** child must file a **guardianship** petition with the court. A judge or jury will evaluate the **adult** child's disability to determine if a **guardian** is necessary and, if so, whether the petitioner is adequate for the job.

For help with transition planning, contact a CSHCS representative at your Local Health Department.

For information or questions regarding CSHCS, contact a CSHCS representative at your Local Health Department, or the Family Phone Line at 800-359-3722, email us at cshcsfc@michigan.gov, or visit our website at www.Michigan.gov/CSCHS

	Natural Supports	Authorized to release Protected Health Information	Patient Advocate Forms	Joint Bank Account	Financial Power of Attorney	Medical Power of Attorney	Durable Power of Attorney	Plenary Guardianship
Takes into account the desires and preferences of another individual	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reversible, without court involvement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Must follow individual's wishes			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Requires court involvement								✓
Healthcare								
Legally responsible for making medical decisions on behalf of another individual						✓	✓	✓
Responsible for looking after physical well-being of another individual								✓
Financial								
Has access to another individuals' funds for the purpose of providing guidance in financial matters				✓	✓		✓	✓
Can make financial decisions on behalf of another individual					✓		✓	✓
Maintains control of someone else's finances				✓	✓		✓	✓
Legally responsible for making financial decisions for another individual							✓	✓
Grants ownership of assets that belong to another individual				✓				✓
Legal								
Can make legal decisions on behalf of another individual							✓	✓

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