

# Make sure you think beyond the will to include important health care and legal documents in your plans.

Health care documents provide important information about your health history. Other documents identify the person designated to make decisions for you in the event you are too ill to do so, and what measures you'd like taken if you are unable to make decisions due to a medical, mental health, or other issue. Everyone hopes these documents are never going to be needed; however, it is important to empower people you trust to carry out your wishes should it be necessary. What follows is an outline of various documents you should consider putting in place.

**Medical Records Summary.** A document that provides an overview of your health history is invaluable in relaying information quickly to health care professionals. Be sure to include your name, date of birth, allergies, medications you are taking along with their dosages, your physicians' names, any health conditions you have, and detailed emergency contact information. You may be able to add this information to your health care profile in a database offered by your physician's medical practice. Alternatively, you can write it up and carry it with you in your wallet.

**HIPPA Release of Information.** The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) protects patient privacy. HIPPA guidelines also allow you to designate how you would like to share information with family, friends, and designated representatives and insurance companies. Health care providers are required to disclose information to you upon request. HIPPA also allows you to designate how you would like to share information with family, friends, and designated representatives and insurance companies. Health care providers are required to disclose information to you upon request. HIPPA also allows you to designate how you would like to share information with family, friends, and designated representatives and insurance companies. Health care providers are required to disclose information to you upon request.

**Durable Power of Attorney.**