

## Your Choice is Never Final

**I**f you choose comfort measures, it does **not** mean that all medical and nursing care will stop. We will continue to provide care so that you will be kept as comfortable and free from suffering as possible. Spiritual and emotional care will be provided. You will be watched very closely and any change will be attended to.

It is important to remember that your choice is not final. It can be changed at any time. Riverview staff will review your choice with you at least every year to make sure this is still what you wish.

We suggest that you discuss your choice with your family members. This way, your family will be able to follow your wishes if you are unable to speak.

For family members who have to make these decisions without being able to talk to the resident, you should consider what the resident has wished or said in the past. These wishes are what you should use to guide your decision.

## Help in Making the Decision

**W**e hope this information helps you to understand the choices available to you. Your doctor, nurse, social worker or chaplain will gladly spend time with you to help you make this difficult decision. We will be asking you to complete a form so that your wishes are communicated to all those staff who care for you.

*With care and compassion,*

*The staff of Riverview Health Centre*

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**Difficult Decisions:  
For Residents &  
Their Families**

# Difficult Decisions

**W**hen you become seriously ill, we know you will face some difficult decisions about your medical treatment. You may not be able to tell anyone what treatment you want, leaving your family to make the choice for you. Would you want to receive life-sustaining treatment? Or, would you choose to let nature take its course? In this brochure, we hope to give you a better understanding about what choices are open to you and your family.

## Medical Terms

Here are some explanations about medical terms that are often talked about.

### **CARDIAC ARREST**

Cardiac arrest occurs when your heart stops beating. All blood flow stops and your brain and other vital organs do not work.

### **CPR (CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION)**

CPR is an emergency treatment done to keep blood and oxygen flowing to your brain during cardiac arrest. When CPR is done, your chest is rhythmically pressed and mouth-to-mouth breathing is done. This treatment may also include stimulating your heart with electricity (defibrillation), putting tubes into lungs and attaching machines that breathe for you (life support).

### **DNR (DO NOT RESUSCITATE)**

DNR is a term communicated to all staff members to alert them that you do not wish CPR to be done.

### **IV (INTRAVENOUS)**

IV is when fluids and/or liquid drugs are put into your blood vessel through a small tube.

### **TUBE FEEDING**

Tube feeding is when liquid food is placed into your body through a tube leading into your stomach. The stomach tube can be placed through your nose or through an opening made into your abdomen.

## Levels of Care

**W**hen deciding what treatment you want, it is important to remember that you have the right to refuse any treatment even if your refusal means that your illness will worsen.

We have grouped your choices under five different levels. Your choice will guide staff when you become seriously ill.

### **LEVEL ONE: COMFORT CARE**

Treatment will be provided to relieve suffering and provide comfort. Medicine would be given to control pain or fever as well as lessen other discomforts. Oral fluids would be encouraged. No CPR would be given.

### **LEVEL TWO**

Comfort measures as in Level One would be given, along with additional treatments as chosen. These include:

- IV fluids • IV medicines • Tube feeding
- Blood transfusions • Blood & other tests

### **LEVEL THREE**

Transfer to a hospital would occur. The doctors at the hospital would decide what treatment is needed. No admission to an Intensive Care Unit would occur. No CPR would be given.

### **LEVEL FOUR**

Transfer to a hospital would occur. CPR would be given.

### **LEVEL FIVE**

Other treatment choices as discussed with the doctor would be offered.

