



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Praise for President Obama for Standing Up for the Rights of All Patients to Choose Their Own Health Care Agent

– Presidential Executive Order affirms bedside access to the legally designated health care agent; a victory for all patients everywhere –

Tallahassee, Fla – Aging with Dignity President Paul Malley praised President Barack Obama's [Executive Order dated April 15, 2010](#) in which he instructs hospitals participating in Medicare/Medicaid to allow bedside access to the patient's legally designated health care agent. Malley said the President's order is a tremendous victory for all patients everywhere, particularly those whose designated health care agent is someone other than an immediate family member.

"[Aging with Dignity](#) has long supported the right of all patients to choose their own health care agent and that whoever that is absolutely be allowed bedside," Aging with Dignity President Paul Malley said. "The presidential executive order affirms that right and it clearly directs hospitals to respect it if they are not already."

Malley noted that quite often people can be estranged from family or separated by distance and instead rely on a close friend or neighbor to act for them in case of a medical emergency or serious illness rendering them unable to make decisions for themselves. If that person has been legally designated as their health care agent, he or she should be given bedside access and the decisions made should be respected by medical providers.

Aging with Dignity is a national non-profit organization that created and distributes the *Five Wishes* advance directive, which meets the legal requirements of 42 states and is available in 26 languages and in Braille. More than 14 million copies are in national circulation, distributed by 23,000 partner organizations.

"All people age 18 and older should have an advance directive in place so that your wishes and dignity can be honored," Malley said.

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