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COMPARISON CHART: ADVANCED DIRECTIVES

	Living Will	DNR	Durable POA for Healthcare
What is it?	Document created under the Illinois Living Will Act which allows a person to directly dictate his or her desires with respect to the administration of “life sustaining procedures” during a “terminal illness	Do not resuscitate order, or DNR, is a medical treatment order instructing medical providers that CPR shall not be attempted if your heart and/or breathing stops	Legal document in which you delegate health care decisions to a trusted person in the event you are incapacitated and are unable to make your own health care decisions
When can it be used?	Must be suffering from an irreversible and incurable injury or illness Injury or illness must be determined to be a terminal condition by attending physician Death must be imminent without the implementation of death delaying procedures/treatment	Either heart has stopped or breathing has stopped	Ordinarily effective immediately upon its execution, absent special directions Lasts until death, but can be revoked sooner
What treatment decisions are affected?	Treatment at issue must be considered a life sustaining treatment	CPR	Agent can make any medical decisions you could make, absent any special limits
Advantages?	Relieves family of burden of making difficult decision with regard to life sustaining treatment Allows you to directly make decisions, as opposed to nominating a person to make decisions on your behalf Particularly valuable if no readily available agent to make decisions or if in final stages of terminal illness	Like the living will, it relieves the burden on your family of making difficult decisions with regard to the administration of CPR Allows you to directly make decisions	Extremely flexible Ensures legally authorized agent is available to make any informed decision after considering the particular circumstances and the available information Can do everything a living will and DNR can do, plus more Can be customized to meet specific wishes of the individual
Disadvantages?	Rigid and inflexible Fails to address any circumstance short of life sustaining treatment in the event of imminent death Food and water interpretation problem	Rigid and inflexible Often fails to parallel an individual’s wishes except in extreme conditions with extreme medical problem	Must have trusted agent available who is willing and able to assist Chosen agent ultimately bears the burden of making the treatment decision

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