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ACP Encourages Adults to Document Healthcare Decisions in Advance

National Healthcare Decisions Day is April 16

PHILADELPHIA, April 2, 2008 –The American College of Physicians (ACP), along with other national, state, and community organizations, is participating in [National Healthcare Decisions Day](#). Set for April 16, 2008, the initiative encourages all adults with decision-making capacity in the United States to talk to their family or doctor about their wishes, consider appointing a proxy, or document their healthcare wishes in a living will, and for providers and facilities to respect those decisions.

“The importance of advance healthcare planning cannot be over-emphasized,” says John Tooker, MD, MBA, FACP, ACP’s executive vice president and chief executive officer. “For patients to ensure that future treatments conform to what they want, it is important for them to document their wishes in advance.”

ACP supports advance healthcare planning in its [Ethics Manual](#), [patient education materials](#), and [clinical guideline to improve palliative care of at the end of life](#), and end-of-life care consensus panel papers ([is there a URL?](#)).

Patients actively participating in decision-making and feedback is one of the “Joint Principles of the Patient-Centered Medical Home,” which ACP and three other national physician organizations released in March 2007.

ACP is a member of the National Healthcare Decisions Day Executive Committee. As a participating organization, ACP is providing information and tools for the public to talk about their wishes with family, friends, and healthcare providers, and execute written advance directives (healthcare power of attorney and living will) in accordance with state laws. These resources are available at [ACP Online](#) and www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org.

The [American College of Physicians](#) is the largest medical specialty organization and the second-largest physician group in the United States. ACP members include 125,000 internal

medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students. Internists specialize in the prevention, detection, and treatment of illness in adults.

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