

WAC 388-97-0240 Resident decision making. (1) At the time of admission, or not later than the completion of the initial comprehensive resident assessment, the nursing home must determine if the resident:

(a) Has appointed another individual to make their health care, financial, or other decisions;

(b) Has created any advance directive or other legal documents that will establish a surrogate decision maker in the future; and

(c) Is not making their own decisions, and identify who has the authority for surrogate decision making, and the scope of the surrogate decision maker's authority.

(2) The nursing home must review the requirements of section (1) of this subsection when the resident's condition warrants the review or when there is a significant change in the resident's condition.

(3) In fulfilling its duty to determine who, if anyone, is authorized to make decisions for the resident, the nursing home must:

(a) Obtain copies of the legal documents that establish the surrogate decision maker's authority to act; and

(b) Document in the resident's clinical record:

(i) The name, address, and telephone number of the individual who has legal authority for substitute decision making;

(ii) The type of decision making authority such individual has; and

(iii) Where copies of the legal documents are located at the facility.

(4) In accordance with state law or at the request of the resident, the resident's surrogate decision maker is, in the case of:

(a) A capacitated resident, the individual authorized by the resident to make decisions on the resident's behalf;

(b) A resident adjudicated by a court of law to be incapacitated, the court appointed guardian; and

(c) A resident who has been determined to be incapacitated, but is not adjudicated incapacitated established through:

(i) A legal document, such as a durable power of attorney for health care; or

(ii) Authority for substitute decision making granted by state law, including RCW 7.70.065.

(5) Determination of an individual's incapacity must be a process according to state law not a medical diagnosis only and be based on:

(a) Demonstrated inability in decision making over time that creates a significant risk of personal harm;

(b) A court order; or

(c) The criteria contained in a legal document, such as durable power of attorney for health care.

(6) The nursing home must promote the resident's right to exercise decision making and self-determination to the fullest extent possible, taking into consideration their ability to understand and respond. Therefore, the nursing home must presume that the resident is the resident's own decision maker unless:

(a) A court has established a full guardianship of the individual;

(b) The capacitated resident has clearly and voluntarily appointed a surrogate decision maker;

(c) A surrogate is established by a legal document such as a durable power of attorney for health care; or

(d) The facility determines that the resident is an incapacitated individual according to chapter 11.130 RCW and (5) (a) of this section.

(7) The nursing home must honor the exercise of the resident's rights by the surrogate decision maker as long as the surrogate acts in accordance with this section and with state and federal law which govern their appointment.

(8) If a surrogate decision maker exercises a resident's rights, the nursing home must take into consideration the resident's ability to understand and respond and must:

(a) Inform the resident that a surrogate decision maker has been consulted;

(b) Provide the resident with the information and opportunity to participate in all decision making to the maximum extent possible; and

(c) Recognize that involvement of a surrogate decision maker does not lessen the nursing home's duty to:

(i) Protect the resident's rights; and

(ii) Comply with state and federal laws.

(9) The nursing home must:

(a) Regularly review any determination of incapacity based on (4)(b) and (c) of this section;

(b) Except for residents with a guardian, cease to rely upon the surrogate decision maker to exercise the resident's rights, if the resident regains capacity, unless so designated by the resident or by court order; and

(c) In the case of a guardian notify the court of jurisdiction in writing if:

(i) The resident regains capacity;

(ii) The guardian is not respecting or promoting the resident's rights;

(iii) The guardianship should be modified; or

(iv) A different guardian needs to be appointed.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.20.090, 18.51.070, 70.97.230, 70.128.040, chapters 70.129, 74.42, and 74.39 RCW. WSR 26-05-046, s 388-97-0240, filed 2/12/26, effective 3/15/26. Statutory Authority: Chapters 18.51 and 74.42 RCW and 42 C.F.R. 489.52. WSR 08-20-062, § 388-97-0240, filed 9/24/08, effective 11/1/08.]