



## Choosing a Health Care Power of Attorney: Who Is Your ‘Who’?

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### Summary of a webinar from July 27, 2022

#### Introduction

This webinar is about planning for when you may need help making health care decisions. This is when something happens to you and someone else will need to know what you want. This is called advanced care planning.

Here are some things to keep in mind about advanced care planning:

- Think about your wishes for your health care
- Write it down and remember to update it as needed
- Pick someone who will honor your wishes

It can be hard to do when you are healthy. It means imagining the “what ifs?”

Leigh Ann says, “It’s all about relationships.”

The person who you choose to make health care decisions on your behalf can be called a “Healthcare Power of Attorney”.

#### Personal Stories

Panelists shared their personal stories.

Alva says at her annual planning meeting when she turned 18 there was a checklist item that asked if she wanted a will and power of attorney. As a young person, this was the last thing on her mind! Her case manager didn’t ask about it again.

Deja says it’s important to have a plan. In the moment it can be a whirlwind of emotions. This makes decisions difficult. It’s hard to know where to start. She says, “It needs to be an honest and true conversation.”

When Shawna left home at 18, she found a power of attorney for safety reasons. She says, “I wanted to choose who would be making decisions for me. It provided me a rock and made me feel better.”



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The speakers on this webinar were:



Co-facilitator **Leigh Ann Kingsbury** is a consultant and gerontologist who has supported people with complex healthcare and disabilities for more than thirty years. She is a Certified Person-Centered Thinking Mentor Trainer, and Board Member Emeritus of The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices. Leigh Ann is the author of AAIDD's *People Planning Ahead: A Guide to Communicating Healthcare and End of Life Wishes* and a Respecting Choices Advance Care Planning Facilitator. Currently, she facilitates the Alzheimer's and Related Dementias Task Force for the state of Ohio.



Co-facilitator **Mary Beth Lepkowsky** leads Helen Sanderson Associates USA, a learning and development consultancy that developed "Living Well," a person-centered approach to supporting people to live well with a long-term condition and plan for care at the end of life. Mary Beth is a Respecting Choices Advance Care Planning Facilitator, Five Wishes Facilitator, and Mentor Trainer for Person Centered Thinking and Planning and has facilitated advance care planning workshops for families and healthcare providers in California.



**Deja Barber** is a 28-year-old female from Raleigh, North Carolina. Currently, Deja is obtaining a double Masters in School & Rehabilitation Counseling from NCA&T State University. She has a contract position with Disability Rights NC working on the COVID Vaccine Project and the Ability Leadership Project. Deja is a graduate of the first Peer Mentoring Training Program sponsored by the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities and is assisting with the second training program. Deja was a presenter at the 2018 Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living conference in 2018 and has been a member of the Youth Steering Committee and NC State Independent Living Council board. Deja has served on numerous community boards.



**Alva Gardner** is a speaker and trainer who uses her unique, lived experience as a woman with a disability to infuse her speeches, trainings, and consulting work with impactful and real-life examples. Alva runs her own company, The 4\*3 Perspective and works as a Person-Centered Thinking trainer, disability inclusion activist, and consultant, supporting organizations and companies to make systemic changes that improve the work they do, and the way support all people, but especially those with disabilities.



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**Shawna Hall** is employed at Helen Sanderson Associates USA and is a co-instructor for *Planning Live: Person Centered Planning Facilitator Training*. She brings her personal experience as a self-advocate and her outstanding storytelling skills to make sure the voices of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are heard. She is a certified Spiritual Director and is pursuing a graduate degree in Counseling.