

City of Gainesville, Florida

Office of Mayor Harvey L. Ward, Jr.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, National Healthcare Decisions Day is recognized across the country on April 16th, it is designed to inspire, educate, and empower the public and providers about the importance of advance care planning; to raise public awareness of the need to plan for health-care decisions, especially those related to end-of-life care and medical decision-making when patients are unable to speak for themselves; and to encourage the specific use of advance directives to communicate these important health care decisions; and

WHEREAS, health care and community organizations across the Florida state are assisting people to plan for future health care decisions in the event they are unable to make their own medical decisions and to encourage the use of advance directives to communicate these important health care decisions; and

WHEREAS, a large percentage of the City of Gainesville residents have not yet prepared for healthcare decisions; in times of crisis and/or at the end of life have not had important conversations with their families, loved ones, and their healthcare providers and documented those decisions; and

WHEREAS, it is likely that a significant reason for this large percentage is that there is both a lack of knowledge and considerable confusion in the public about advance care planning and advance directives; and

WHEREAS, one of the principal goals of National Healthcare Decisions Day is to encourage physicians and their care teams, medical groups, hospitals, health systems, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, continuing care retirement communities, hospices and community organizations to participate in a statewide effort to provide clear and consistent information to the public about advance care planning; and

WHEREAS, Community Hospice and Palliative Care of North Central Florida, UF Health, and other health care organizations and community groups have endorsed this event and are committed to educating the public about the importance of discussing health care choices and executing advance directives; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic makes advance care planning even more important with every age group being impacted and 840,000 deaths and counting in the United States attributed to the virus; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the month of April 2023 being recognized as "National Healthcare Decisions Month" and April 16, 2023 as "National Healthcare Decisions Day", more citizens will have conversations about their health care decisions; more citizens will execute advance directives to make their wishes known; and fewer families and health care providers will have to struggle with making difficult health care decisions in the absence of guidance from the patient.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Harvey L. Ward, Jr., by the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Gainesville, do hereby proclaim April 2023 as

National Healthcare Decisions Month

in the City of Gainesville and invite all our neighbors to join me in recognizing this day and encourage neighbors to increase their understanding and awareness of care at the end of life, discuss their end of life wishes with their families, and observe this month with appropriate activities and programs in the City of Gainesville, Florida.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the official seal of the City of Gainesville, Florida, this 16th day of March, A.D., 2023.


Harvey L. Ward, Jr.
Mayor

