

She was at peace with her choices

"My mother chose the way she wanted to end her days."

Ellen Sorce

A year has come and gone, since my mom passed away. Before we met with the doctor and received her diagnosis of esophageal cancer, our family sat down with her, to go over advance directives paperwork. In a conversation with six family members, she told us exactly how she wanted to spend her last days. She entrusted her wishes to me and to my youngest daughter, to ensure her passing was what she wanted, if she could no longer speak for herself. She filled out her Health Care Proxy and Living Will forms, and they were signed and witnessed.

When we received the diagnosis, we reviewed her paperwork, and completed a MOLST form, which was signed by her physician. Her decision was to refuse surgery, chemotherapy and radiation. She wanted to be comfortable and pain free, in her own home. She knew she had the option of changing her course of treatment at any time.

I thank God so many of us heard her words and we had this in writing. Well-meaning family members did not agree with her decisions and wanted her to use every means available to survive. She had already discussed survival rates with her doctor, and was at peace with her choices. I was charged with making sure that those wishes were met.

When people told me they were sorry she was gone, I thanked them, but told them it really was okay. The hospice nurse and aids were wonderful, helping her and our family. Her passage was beautiful. My mother left comfortably, at home, with her cat on her bed. If I had never done anything for her, at least I made sure she ended her days in peace.