



**For Immediate Release:**

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**National Healthcare Decisions Day Set for April 16, 2010**

The Allegany/Western Steuben Rural Health Network, Inc.'s *Sharing Your Wishes* program, the Allegany County Community Partnership on Aging, along with other national, state and community organizations, are joining an effort to highlight the importance of advance healthcare decision-making, with the formal designation of April 16, 2010 as National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD). As a participating organization, the Allegany County Sharing Your Wishes program is providing educational tools to the public to talk about their health care choices with family, friends and healthcare providers, and then to complete the written advance directives (Health Care Proxy and Living Will) in accordance with New York State law. These and additional Advance Care Planning resources are available at [www.sharingyourwishes.org](http://www.sharingyourwishes.org) and/or [www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org](http://www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org).

Several events are planned for the week of April 12-16<sup>th</sup> in celebration of NHDD. Specifically, on April 12<sup>th</sup> at the Allegany County Board of County Legislators meeting, National Healthcare Decision Day will be announced with a Proclamation declaring April 16<sup>th</sup> as NHDD in Allegany County. At this meeting the county legislators will be encouraged to complete their own Health Care Proxies. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, from 9 to 11 am Jones Memorial Hospital will welcome the public in the lobby of the hospital to receive free Advance Care Planning educational materials and/or assistance with completion of their Health Care Proxies.

In addition, there will be a NHDD reception from 2:30-3:30 pm in the Jones Memorial Hospital lobby, with Health Care Proxies, Living Wills and other Advance Care Planning educational materials available. Community members and health care professionals are invited to be part of the celebration, which will include media coverage and a group photo on the hospital lawn.

“As a result of National Healthcare Decisions Day, many more people in our community can be expected to have thoughtful conversations about their healthcare decisions and complete reliable advance directives to make their wishes known,” said Lynne Palmiere, Sharing Your Wishes project coordinator at the Allegany/Western Steuben Rural Health Network. “Fewer families and healthcare providers will have to struggle with making difficult healthcare decisions in the absence of guidance from the patient, and healthcare providers and facilities will be better equipped to address advance healthcare planning issues before a crisis and be better able to honor patient wishes when the time comes to do so.”

*Sharing Your Wishes* is supported by the Allegany/Western Steuben Rural Health Network, the Community Partnership on Aging and the Community Health Foundation of Western and Central New York. For more information about National Healthcare Decision Day, please visit [www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org](http://www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org) or call 585-593-5223.