
AGING WITH DIGNITY

FACT SHEET ABOUT *FIVE WISHES* & THE 500,000 *WISHES* CAMPAIGN

What is Five Wishes?

Five Wishes is an advance directive that helps people make important end-of-life-care decisions that address their medical, personal, emotional and spiritual needs before a health crisis.

Five Wishes helps answer the following questions:

- ? Who will make decisions for you when you can't make them yourself?
- ? What kind of medical treatment do you want or not want?
- ? How comfortable would you like to be?
- ? How do you want people to treat you?
- ? What do you want your loved ones to know?

Is Five Wishes a legal document?

Five Wishes is an advance directive that meets the legal requirements in the District of Columbia and the following 40 states: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Those who live in other states or outside the United States can still use *Five Wishes* as a valuable planning and discussion tool to express their preferences to their loved ones and caregivers.

Who developed Five Wishes?

Five Wishes was developed by the national nonprofit organization Aging with Dignity. With help from leading medical experts and the American Bar Association's Commission on Law and Aging, *Five Wishes* was introduced in 1998 and today more than 8 million documents are circulating. Aging with Dignity was founded by Jim Towey, an attorney and former head of Florida's health and social services agency, who worked closely with Mother Teresa for 12 years, including living for one year in a hospice she ran in Washington, D.C. Inspired by his firsthand experience, Towey sought a way for patients and their families to plan ahead and cope with serious illness. He founded Aging with Dignity in 1996 and later created *Five Wishes*, which quickly became the most popular and widely-used advance directive in America.

What is the 500,000 Wishes Campaign?

The ***500,000 Wishes Campaign*** is an outreach effort and call to action to distribute copies of *Five Wishes* nationwide over the next 12 months to ethnically diverse communities, hospitals and hospices and organizations that serve our aging population. The campaign is a collaboration among the UnitedHealth Foundation, Aging with Dignity, the Administration on Aging, the American Hospital Association and other organizations.

Until recently, *Five Wishes* was available only in English and Spanish. To provide access to this important service to the thousands of people who speak other languages in the United States, the United Health Foundation funded the translation of *Five Wishes* into twenty dual-language documents; English alongside of Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese (traditional and simplified), Croatian, French, Gujarati, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Urdu and Vietnamese.

What is being done to reach 500,000 people?

Organizations and individuals working with Aging with Dignity are undertaking a number of efforts to help ensure that 500,000 people are able to have their wishes heard, no matter their primary language or resources.

The U.S. Administration on Aging will assist in the national Call to Action disseminating *Five Wishes* through its national aging services network of state and area agencies on aging, tribal organizations, community service providers, family caregivers and volunteers. This outreach effort will help mobilize the network, which works on the front lines with millions of older persons in their homes and in the community, to reach out to as many people as possible. www.aoa.gov

United Health Foundation provides information to physicians and other health professionals, individuals and communities to support health and medical decisions that lead to better health outcomes and healthier communities. www.unitedhealthfoundation.org

UnitedHealth Group is working with Aging with Dignity to make the *Five Wishes* available to its staff and employees, and working with both large and small employers who purchase UnitedHealth Group health plans to raise awareness about the importance of having advanced directives with the employees and their family members. www.unitedhealthgroup.com

The American Hospital Association (AHA) will distribute the translated *Five Wishes* documents to all 5,000 US hospitals as well as hospital consumer advocates and volunteers – often the ones to assist patients and families in deciding their end-of-life wishes. In addition, AHA will actively promote the availability of *Five Wishes* in its family of publications for hospital executives and trustees, on AHA Web sites and at regional and national meetings. This new resource will help ensure information about end-of-life care is accessible and understandable to the diverse communities hospitals serve. www.aha.org

The American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA) is encouraging its 5,700 members to disseminate the *Five Wishes* materials to the millions of older Americans and family served through the continuum of aging services: adult day services, home health, community services, senior housing, assisted living residences, continuing care retirement communities, and nursing homes. AAHSA is also making the materials available through its conferences, electronic newsletters, Web sites and listservs. <http://www.aahsa.org>

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) will promote the availability of the *Five Wishes* resources to members and other share holders through NHPCO's websites – www.caringinfo.org and www.nhpc.org. NHPCO will also disseminate information about *Five Wishes* through its e-communications newsbriefs and Connections and Newline publications.

Allied Physicians IPA in Alhambra, California will be using *Five Wishes* to help providers and patients be better prepared for their most difficult time. Allied Physicians IPA states that *Five Wishes* is a great tool to start off with and to educate their patients and community on their personal wishes. "Allied Physicians IPA is honored to be part of *Five Wishes* release servicing the community," said Dennis Chan, MD, Director of Business Development.

Asociación Nacional Pro Personas Mayores (ANPPM) a national organization that provides a variety of services for Spanish-speaking people age 55 and older, will help distribute *Cinco Deseos* through all of the organization's U.S. regional offices and post it on the ANPPM's web site. www.buscapique.com/latinusa/buscafile/oeste/anppm.htm

The Arab-American Family Support Center, the largest provider of social services to the Arab immigrant community in New York City will engage in a multi-faceted campaign to ensure that Arabic speaking people in the New York area will have access to *Five Wishes*. AAFSC will provide copies of *Five Wishes* (in both English and Arabic) to all adult clients who come to AAFSC for services; post information about *Five Wishes* on the website and promoted in the e-newsletter; provide copies of *Five Wishes* to all staff and board members; and provide information to doctors (both Arabic and non-Arabic) in the communities where there is a significant Arab immigrant presence. www.aafscny.org

Hamilton Madison House (HMH), a community-based not-for-profit agency founded in 1898 to serve the growing immigrant communities of Lower Manhattan in New York City will distribute *Five Wishes* among the program participants in their own language so that they may make their own choices and allow their wishes to be understood. www.hmhonline.org

The National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc., the only national aging organization solely dedicated to improving the quality of life for low-income African American and minority seniors will spread the word about *500,000 Wishes* through its employment programs and seniors housing facilities around the country. NCBA will also provide information in newsletters that are sent through various programs. www.ncba-aged.org

National Council on Aging (NCOA), dedicated to improving the lives of older Americans will help to spread the word about the availability of *Five Wishes* in 20 different languages through its newsletters and post information on the website, www.ncoa.org

The National Association of Thrift Savings Plan Participants will post *Five Wishes* materials and information on the new website, www.natspp.org

OWL, the voice of midlife and Older Women will be distributing *Five Wishes* materials to local OWL chapters, making it available to at-large members, and posting information on the organization's website, www.owl-national.org, and linking to Aging With Dignity's website.

B'Nai B'Rith International will provide information about *Five Wishes* on the organization's website, www.bnaibrith.org, and make additional information available to members.

The National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs, a professional membership organization with members drawn primarily from persons working in or interested in the field of aging, community-based services, and nutrition and the elderly, will help distribute the *Five Wishes* materials through its Washington Bulletin and post it on its website, www.nanasp.org

Where Is More Information About Five Wishes Available?

Individuals may request the *Five Wishes* at www.agingwithdignity.org, or by calling 888-594-7437. *Five Wishes* was created by the non-profit organization Aging with Dignity with help from leading medical experts and the American Bar Association's Commission on Law and Aging. The document is easy to use and focuses on personal care preferences in addition to important medical decisions.

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