



# Who Uses FIVE WISHES®?

Individuals and groups of all kinds find **FIVE WISHES** of great value. **FIVE WISHES** speaks to concerns common among many different user groups...

## ■ Adults Age 18 and Older

Every person age 18 and older should have an advance directive, not just the elderly or those with chronic or terminal conditions. Accidents and sudden illness can afflict people of any age at any time, rendering them unable to make health care decisions for themselves. *Five Wishes* helps families avoid guessing and second-guessing about a loved one's preferences.

## ■ Senior Citizens

Those in their later years use *Five Wishes* to plan for their own care with an eye toward pain management, personal and spiritual matters, protecting their dignity and making it clear what kind of life support treatment they want or don't want. A completed *Five Wishes* thus becomes a gift to their adult children. *Five Wishes* helps the adult children honor their parents by knowing and respecting their wishes.

## ■ Health Care Providers

Health care providers use *Five Wishes* because it improves communication with patients and caregivers, saves time and frees health care professionals from having to provide treatment the patient doesn't want. *Five Wishes* sends a positive message about dignity, comfort and personal relationships, which is why many hospitals also distribute *Five Wishes* at health fairs and community events. *Five Wishes* has helped health care providers improve their clinical performance because of the emphasis the document places on patient comfort and dignity.

## ■ Ethnic Groups, Non English-Speakers

*Five Wishes* is available in 26 languages to address the needs of our increasingly diverse nation. Bilingual versions of *Five Wishes* show the English text side-by-side with the translated text, so health care workers who speak only English can readily discern the non English-speaker's preferences. *Cinco Deseos*, the Spanish-only version of *Five Wishes*, was introduced in 1998 and is complemented by the *Siguientes Pasos* (Next Steps) discussion guide and the *Cinco Deseos* instructional DVD featuring a Spanish-speaking presenter.

## ■ Employers

Eighty percent of companies surveyed say addressing end-of-life issues with their employees is important. *Five Wishes* helps employers provide employee eldercare support, which helps to reduce employee absenteeism and increase productivity. Many employers include *Five Wishes* as a low-cost benefit and also distribute it during annual "benefit fairs" and during open enrollment periods. Many also promote it in workplace informational displays, employee newsletters and e-mail messages.

## ■ Educators

*Five Wishes* is used as a teaching tool in medical, nursing, gerontology and social work programs in colleges and universities across America. For many in undergraduate programs, *Five Wishes* is their first encounter with issues of aging, illness and death. Many university-affiliated health and ethics policy centers commend *Five Wishes* as a step forward in improving end-of-life care.

## ■ Hospices

Hospices use *Five Wishes* in their community education and outreach efforts and upon admission of the hospice patient. *Five Wishes* allows those nearing the end of their lives to clearly state how they want to be treated, how their pain is to be managed and what their family members and others are to know. Some hospices have found that *Five Wishes* helps the patient's family better deal with an impending death (and post-death grieving) because family members know they are doing what the seriously ill person wanted. Hospices report their use of *Five Wishes* has helped raise general awareness of hospice services.

## ■ Places of Worship

Places of worship distribute *Five Wishes* to their congregants because it assists health care providers in respecting their religious beliefs. Although it is not a religious document, *Five Wishes* emphasizes personal and spiritual matters and the important role of faith communities during times of serious illness, thus affirming the God-given human dignity of all. *Five Wishes* owes much of its success to the many places of worship that were among the first to embrace it.



Aging with Dignity • P.O. Box 1661 • Tallahassee, FL 32302  
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