



Advance Care Planning (ACP) Information

It is important to remember that anyone over the age of 18 is legally an adult, and parents, designated guardians, or family members who were previously legal guardians no longer hold that role. Below are steps that can be taken to ensure a student's family members can be contacted and assist in a medical emergency. The Healthcare Power of Attorney (HCPOA) document referenced below will protect the student if they are unable to make medical decisions for themselves and ensure that their loved ones will be provided medical information when necessary.

Healthcare Power of Attorney (HCPOA)

None of us can predict when we might be faced with an accident or illness that might take away our ability to make healthcare decisions. Anyone 18 or older should consider appointing someone (over age 18) they trust to serve as their HCPOA. It does not need to be a parent or relative. A HCPOA can be changed and updated at any time.

By completing a HCPOA document (available through your medical provider or via the two links below), it allows a student to:

- Clearly communicate their personal healthcare wishes
- Name who they would want to make medical decisions for them in times when they are unable to speak for themselves.

Please know this is a legal document and should be placed on file with the student's primary healthcare provider and their healthcare agent(s). In the absence of a signed HCPOA, there is not a clear legal medical decision maker for the student. The process on guardianship through the court of law may need to be started, which could be timely and costly for the student and their family.

We encourage Viterbo students and family members to become informed of which healthcare facility a student may be taken to in an emergency prior to a student's arrival on campus for their first term (this is generally Mayo Franciscan Healthcare, but may also be Gundersen Health System). Most likely, the facility will require a release of information. Giving someone authorization to access information under HIPAA does not give them any ability to make medical decisions for the student. In La Crosse, both Gundersen Health System and Mayo Clinic Health System offer free assistance in completing the HCPOA or answering any questions students and families may have about Advance Care Planning; your home health care system or provider may provide this service as well.

Gundersen Health System

[Advance Care Planning \(includes a downloadable form for WI, MN, and IA\)](#)

Phone: 608.782.7300 ext. 56000 or 800.362.9567 ext. 56000

Mayo Clinic Health System

[Advance Care Planning](#)

Phone: 608.392.9754 or 608.392.7900