



INTRODUCING A NEW RESOURCE FROM THE UPENN COLLABORATIVE

# The ADVANCE SELF-ADVOCACY PLAN

## An Easy-to-Use, Practical New Tool for Creating a Mental Health Crisis Plan or Psychiatric Advance Directive

**Mental Health Crisis Plans and legally binding Psychiatric Advance Directives (“PADs”)** contain specific information and instructions about an individual’s treatment needs and preferences during a mental health crisis or psychiatric hospitalization. They support patients’ rights to self-determination during times when they are the most vulnerable and least likely to be able to speak for themselves.

### PADs... A Critically Underused Planning Tool

An advance plan can help psychiatric treatment staff, family and friends quickly implement effective care, and minimize inappropriate, coerced or involuntary treatment that can delay recovery for a person in crisis. This is especially important when an individual is judged to lack the capacity to make decisions regarding his or her own mental health treatment. Studies show a high potential demand for PADs; yet, despite their great utility, few of these important crisis planning documents are created or used.

### Why are PADs Rarely Created or Implemented?

Many obstacles have been identified that prevent people from creating psychiatric advance plans or directives. Some common ones include: not knowing what information to include in the plan; feeling overwhelmed when faced with forms that are difficult to read and understand; not comfortable thinking about a future mental

health crisis; lack of information about selecting a mental health care power-of-attorney; and apprehension about creating a legal document.

### The ASAP: Input from Consumers & Providers Eliminated Many Obstacles for Creating Plans

The purpose of the **Advance Self-Advocacy Plan (“ASAP”** for short) is to make psychiatric advance planning accessible to more people who have concerns about their future mental health care.

To better understand and address planning obstacles, the Advance Self-Advocacy Plan (ASAP) Guidebook and Planning Sheets were developed with extensive input from consumers who have been hospitalized for psychiatric care and also from providers of mental health services.

The result is a practical and user-friendly tool that can be used by people with mental health challenges to create their own, customized plans which keep them “in the driver’s seat” of their psychiatric care and personal life... even during a crisis.

### Special Features of the ASAP

- ◆ Addresses advance planning needs in a simple, inviting and easy-to-use format;
- ◆ Can be used as a legally binding psychiatric advance directive (PAD), but also emphasizes the value of the planning process, as separate from the legal aspect;
- ◆ Includes practical sections for keeping personal responsibilities – such as the care of pets, finances, employment, education, mail, home needs, and especially children – on track during periods of crisis or hospitalization;
- ◆ Works as an excellent crisis planning feature for Wellness Plans, such as WRAP.



Click the Link Below for Free Downloads of **The ASAP Guidebook & The ASAP Document Planning Sheets**

[http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool\\_id=200](http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=200)

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The UPenn Collaborative on Community Integration is A Rehabilitation Research & Training Center Promoting Community Integration of Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities, Funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research.

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