

## Choices and Values Exercise

### Personal Values in Long Term Care

*This scenario describes an imaginary situation. As you read it, think of yourself in that situation. Then answer the questions at the end.*

You are a 78-year-old resident living in a nursing facility because of a diabetes-related amputation of one foot, low vision, and moderately severe arthritis. You are a wheelchair user. You can usually move your own chair (unless your arthritis is bothering you a lot), but you need assistance to transfer to the toilet, get in and out of bed, bathe, and dress.

You entered the home as a private patient almost three years ago after your amputation, but you've been on Medicaid for over a year. The home is one of the better ones in your community. Many staff members have worked there a long time, care about the residents, and are usually fairly responsive to your requests for help (though you've had a few urinary accidents in evening because of slow responses to your call for help with toileting.) Many residents, including your roommate, are confused. However, you have two friends among the alert residents with whom you get along well. You participate in most activities, though you find them boring because they are designed mainly for less alert residents. You are fortunate to have brought your own TV. Also, you have your own phone (which your daughter's family has paid for since you became eligible for Medicaid.)

Your daughter, son-in-law, and three grandchildren (in late teens and early twenties) live in town. Your daughter visits at least once a week, often with another family member. Once or twice a month she brings you to their house for dinner or takes you out. Your son and his wife live several hours away; they usually visit every two months. Sometimes friends from the church you used to attend or the neighborhood you used to live in come to visit.

You have developed a heart irregularity that your doctor thinks is likely to cause you to die suddenly. While it's hard to predict when that would happen, the doctor's best guess is that you would live no more than a year. It could be easily corrected with a pacemaker, which the doctor strongly recommends. Inserting a pacemaker is routine and low-risk. It is done with local anesthesia. With the pacemaker, you could live many more years. Your vision and arthritis are likely to worsen slowly.

1. Would you want to have the pacemaker inserted?     Yes     No
  
2. How sure are you that your choice is the best one for you?  
 Very sure             Somewhat sure             Unsure
  
3. How important was each of the following factors in making these decisions?

	Extremely important	Somewhat important	Not important at all
Letting nature take its course.	3	2	1
Preserving my quality of life.	3	2	1
Living as long as possible.	3	2	1
Being able to make my own decisions.	3	2	1
Considering the amount of burden I would be to others.	3	2	1
Having privacy.	3	2	1
Being comfortable and as pain free as possible.	3	2	1
Being able to relate to family and friends.	3	2	1
Considering my level of physical restriction.	3	2	1
Being able to die in a short while rather than linger on.	3	2	1
Recognizing that my life is sacred, no matter what its quality.	3	2	1
Being as independent as possible	3	2	1
Considering the cost involved to Medicaid for my care.	3	2	1
Considering the opportunity to participate in meaningful activities.	3	2	1

Other factors (specify):

	3	2	1
	3	2	1