

More elderly Americans completing advance directives

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(HealthDay)—Over the past decade there has been a significant increase in the rate of completion of advance directives (ADs) among elderly Americans, according to research published online April 2 in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Maria J. Silveira, M.D., M.P.H., of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and colleagues conducted a [retrospective cohort study](#) of individuals, aged 60 or older at death, who died between 2000 and 2010. The authors assessed the associations between AD completion, hospitalization, and [hospital](#) death.

The researchers found that the rate of AD completion among decedents increased from 47 percent in 2000 to 72 percent in 2010. During the same period, the proportion of decedents with at least one hospitalization during the last two years of life increased from 52 to 71 percent; the rate

of hospital deaths decreased from 45 to 35 percent. After adjustment for possible confounders, no significant association was found between greater use of ADs and declining hospital deaths.

"There has been a significant increase in rates of AD completion over the last decade, but this trend has had little effect upon hospitalization and hospital death, suggesting that AD completion is unlikely to stem hospitalization before death," the authors write.

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