

144B.6 Attorney in fact — priority to make decisions.

1. Unless the district court sitting in equity specifically finds that the attorney in fact is acting in a manner contrary to the wishes of the principal or the durable power of attorney for health care provides otherwise, an attorney in fact who is known to the health care provider to be available and willing to make health care decisions has priority over any other person, including a guardian appointed pursuant to [chapter 633](#), to act for the principal in all matters of health care decisions. The attorney in fact has authority to make a particular health care decision only if the principal is unable, in the judgment of the attending physician, to make the health care decision. If the principal objects to a decision to withhold or withdraw health care, the principal shall be presumed to be able to make a decision.

2. In exercising the authority under the durable power of attorney for health care, the attorney in fact has a duty to act in accordance with the desires of the principal as expressed in the durable power of attorney for health care or otherwise made known to the attorney in fact at any time. A declaration executed by the principal pursuant to the life-sustaining procedures Act, [chapter 144A](#), shall not be interpreted as expressing an intent to prohibit the withdrawal of hydration or nutrition when required to be provided parenterally or through intubation and shall not otherwise restrict the authority of the attorney in fact unless either the declaration or the durable power of attorney for health care expressly provides otherwise. If the principal's desires are unknown, the attorney in fact has a duty to act in the best interests of the principal, taking into account the principal's overall medical condition and prognosis.

[91 Acts, ch 140, §6](#)