

When would my advance care directive be used?

- **Only** when you are unable to express your health care wishes.
- To assist the 'Person Responsible' for consenting on your behalf.

Can I change my plan?

- Yes, it is recommended that your plan be reviewed regularly or following an illness.

Who is the 'Person Responsible'?

In NSW, if you are unable to consent to a treatment, health practitioners must seek consent from what the law calls your 'person responsible'. There is a specific order of people they must ask. Your 'person responsible' is either:

1. An Enduring Guardian, *if none, then*
2. Your most recent and current spouse or de facto spouse (including same sex partner), *if none,*
3. An unpaid carer, *if none,*
4. Any other relative or friend with a close & continuing relationship.

An Enduring Guardian is someone you legally appoint to make lifestyle and health care decisions for you should you lose the capacity to make your own decisions.

A Power of Attorney cannot make medical decisions for you

Where can I get more information?

- You may also discuss your wishes with your GP. Your GP or other health care professionals can provide information related to your health and ageing. This may be alone or together with your family.
- The Public Guardian has information about appointing an Enduring Guardian including a free book called 'Your Way to Plan Ahead'. Call **(02) 8688 6060** or visit <http://www.publicguardian.lawlink.nsw.gov.au> for more information.

What do I do now?

- ❑ Learn about any health and ageing issues you may have.
- ❑ Think about your values and wishes for treatment.
- ❑ Who is your 'Person Responsible'? Consider legally appointing an Enduring Guardian.
- ❑ Talk to friends, family, GP about your values and wishes.

For more information & tools:

planningaheadtools.com.au

Or visit

www.health.nsw.gov.au/patients/acp

Advance Care Planning

Making your wishes known



What is Advance Care Planning?

Advance Care Planning means talking with your family, friends and your doctor about the type of care you would want to receive if you became seriously ill or injured.

Advance Care Planning helps in many ways;

- Talking about your health and ageing early aims to help you and your loved ones to understand what treatments you might require in the future.
- Discussing your medical treatment wishes **before** you become ill gives you and your loved ones the opportunity to talk about your values, experiences, fears and preferences for end of life care.
- You can guide your loved ones and your doctor to make medical treatment decisions for you when you are unable to speak for yourself.



Why do I need to think about advance care planning?

Medical technology advances mean that there are treatments that can keep you alive and prolong your life.

Some people have firm ideas about how they want to live the rest of their life, including conditions that they might find unacceptable.

Advance Care Planning encourages you to think about and discuss:

- The person/s who you would want to make health and lifestyle decisions on your behalf, if you were unable to do this for yourself.
- Your personal medical treatment goals, based on your understanding of your current health and the ageing process.
- The things that give your life meaning for you, and how you want to live well for the rest of your life.
- Any medical treatments that might prolong your life that you do not want to receive.
- Any strong beliefs that will influence your wishes for medical treatment towards the end of your life.

In NSW, there is no set form to record your wishes

How can I plan in advance?

Advance care planning involves:

- ✓ Thinking about and discussing your values and wishes for your future care with your family, friends and significant others.
- ✓ Regularly reviewing your medical condition/s and discussing your treatment options with your family, GP and any specialists that you visit.
- ✓ Continuing these discussions for the rest of your life because your care wishes may change.

You may also want to consider documenting your wishes in an **advance care directive**.

What is an advance care directive?

An advance care directive is a written document which outlines your wishes for healthcare in the case that you cannot speak for yourself. It may include statements about your values, beliefs and goals of medical treatment, and often specifically records end of life care preferences.

Advance care directives made in other states and territories are enforceable in NSW