



Advance Care Planning

Planning together for the care that matters to you

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What is Advance Care Planning

Advance Care planning enables your wishes and individual care and support needs to be communicated digitally with your healthcare professionals across London.

Advance Care Planning is entirely voluntary and no one is under any pressure to take any of the steps described here. If you do choose to plan your future care, you can change your mind at any time.

Healthcare professionals will always try to discuss decisions regarding your care with you, but if you are no longer able to express your views, they will use information you have included in your Advance Care Plan to guide their decision making.



Benefits of Advance Care Planning

Some people choose to make an Advance Care Plan because they have clear views about the treatments they would or wouldn't want if they were to become ill. Others decide to discuss their future because their circumstances have changed, such as being diagnosed with a serious illness.

Having an Advance Care Plan ensures that your wishes and preferences are always considered when healthcare professionals are caring for you or providing you with medical treatment. An Advance Care Plan is visible to all health and care services who may be involved in your care and will reflect what is important to you.

If you are no longer able to express your views about your care, healthcare professionals must identify what is in your best interests and make decisions on your behalf. Whilst family members and significant others will be asked for an opinion on what they think you would want, they cannot make decisions for you unless they have Lasting Power of Attorney for Health & Welfare. So if you have already talked about it and made some notes, these decisions in more difficult times will be easier and may help you feel more secure and in control of your future.

How to create an Advance Care Plan?

For some people, a discussion with their family or doctors is enough. If you discuss any preferences with your doctor or nurse, they will make a record of your views in your medical notes. They may also ask your permission to write to other members of your healthcare team (such as your hospital consultant, GP or District Nurse) so that everyone is aware of your views.

They can also document the discussions on Urgent Care Plan UCP (this only applies to patients who live inside the M25) which is available to many other care providers eg GP, Ambulance Service so they can be aware of your wishes, preferences and decisions.

You may choose to write your decisions down in another way. There are some examples of ways to do this in this leaflet. You can also appoint someone to make decisions on your behalf if you are no longer able to do so, by formally appointing a Lasting Power of Attorney (see below).

Advance Statement of Wishes and Preferences

This is the easiest, least formal way of expressing your views in a written document. You can incorporate everything that is important to you, including any information you think would be helpful for those who care for you to know. You may want to write down where you would like to be cared for, whether you want to go to hospital for treatment, who you would like to be with you, any religious or spiritual requirements, even the music you like to listen to. You are free to express any wishes or preferences you want.

This is not a legal document so whilst your doctors will use this to guide them in making decisions regarding your care, there may be times when it is not possible to follow your exact wishes. In particular there may be medical treatments which would not be appropriate in certain circumstances, because they would not be of overall benefit.

Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (ADRT)

You may have strong views regarding treatment that you would not wish to receive. An Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment is a legally binding document, which clearly states any treatment you do not wish to have. It is important to discuss this with your doctors as it needs to be specific in its instructions, and also needs to be signed and witnessed, including a statement that the decision stands 'even if life is at risk'.

You cannot use the document to make doctors give you treatment which they feel would not work.

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)

You may choose to appoint someone to make decisions on your behalf if in the future you are no longer able to make them for yourself. An LPA can be appointed for health and/or financial decisions. Most people choose to involve a family member or friend who is aware of their wishes. Doctors will discuss decisions regarding your care with an LPA as if they were planning care with you. There are special rules about appointing an LPA. You can get a form from the Office of the Public Guardian, which explains what to do. Your LPA will need to be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian before it can be used.

Sharing Information

If you have a discussion regarding your future, or complete one of the above documents, it is vital that the information is shared as widely as possible to ensure that your wishes are met. Your GP, District Nurse, Specialist Palliative Care Nurse and hospital team are examples of people who should be made aware of your views and be given copies of your Advance Statement or ADRT. The best way to share this information is usually via the Urgent Care Plan (UCP) for London (this only applies to patients who live inside the M25).

Who can I talk to if I want further help with anything in this leaflet?

North London Hospice nurses and doctors would be pleased to talk to you about anything related to Advance Care Planning. If you prefer you can speak to your GP or consultant.

Useful Links:

Advance Care Planning

www.nhs.uk/conditions/end-of-life-care

Lasting Power of Attorney guidance

www.justice.gov.uk/forms/opg/lasting-power-of-attorney

Tel: 0300 456 0300

Urgent Care Plan UCP London

ucp.onelondon.online/patients/

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Serving the Boroughs of Barnet, Enfield and Haringey

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