

Advance Care Planning (ACP)

Advance care planning gives you the opportunity to plan your future care, support, and medical treatment, while you have capacity to do so.



What is ACP?

ACP is the process of thinking about, discussing and documenting your wishes for your future care. This is often completed in discussion with a healthcare professional. It can take place at any time but it is sensible to do it when you are well enough.

Advance care planning should include everything that is important to you. It might include, for example, where you want to be cared for at the end of your

life, or what you want to happen to a pet if you can no longer look after them.

Why should I plan ahead?

Being diagnosed with a life-limiting illness, growing older or approaching the end of your life may make you think about what your wishes would be as you become more unwell. Writing down your preferences can help to ensure the care you receive is tailored to you.

Where can these wishes be recorded?

There is a document called 'preferred priorities of care' which can guide you through some questions and ideas to think about. You do not need to use a formal document to record your preferences. This document is not legally binding but helps professionals to know what is important.

Can I change my mind once I have completed the document?

Yes. You should review your preferences regularly and can change your mind at any time.

What is an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (ADRT)?

This is a legally binding advance decision to refuse certain treatments in specific circumstances. Sometimes people wish to refuse, for example, tube feeding or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). An ADRT is normally completed in discussion with medical professionals.

If you wish to refuse certain treatments, this needs to be written down, signed and witnessed. Once completed, this is legally binding, but you can still change your mind. Copies of this should be given to those involved in your care.

What is Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)?

This is the process of legally appointing a trusted individual (called an attorney) to make decisions on your behalf in the future if you become unable to make decisions for yourself.

There are two forms of LPA, one for finances and property, and one for health and personal welfare. Your health and welfare LPA will be able to make decisions regarding medical treatments and future care on your behalf.

LPAs must be registered with the Office of Public Guardian.

What if I don't want to plan for the future?

This process is entirely optional. We understand that it is not right for everyone, but it can help to guide your care and treatment. If you do not want to talk about ACP, let your doctor or nurse know.

If you do become more unwell, and are unable to make decisions yourself, your doctors and nurses will make decisions at the time which they think are in your best interests, based on what they know of you and your illness and from discussions with your loved ones.

