



## Questions to ask yourself about Advance Care Planning

- What would happen if you became very sick or had a serious accident and could not make decisions for yourself?
- Who will help make medical decisions for you?
- How will they know what you want if you cannot communicate this for yourself?

## What is Advanced Care Planning?

Advance Care Planning is the process of planning ahead for your future healthcare. It's about planning the type of health care you would want to receive if you became seriously ill or injured in the future and were unable to participate in the discussion at that time.

You can write your preferences and values down in an **Advance Care Directive**. This is a document that allows you to document your preferences for future medical treatment. You can record general statements about your values and preferences to guide future medical treatment decisions, or record instructions consenting to or refusing specific types of treatment.

If there comes a time when you are too unwell to speak for yourself, your Advance Care Directive will help to guide your loved ones, and the healthcare professionals who are caring for you, to make the decisions that are right for you.

## How does it work?

### A: Appoint a Medical Treatment Decision Maker

- A **Medical Treatment Decision Maker** is a person you choose to make medical decisions, as stated in a legal form known as a Medical Treatment Decision Maker form.
- It is advisable to select somebody you trust as your medical treatment decision maker, such as a family member, friend or your GP, and to choose them while you have decision making capacity.



- By signing a Medical Treatment Decision Maker form, you make it clear who you want to make medical treatment decisions for you in the event that you are too sick to do it yourself.
- You can also appoint a **Support Person**. A Support Person can help you to make your own medical decisions while you are still able to. Your GP can also help you with these decisions.

#### **C:** Communicate

- Talk about your values and healthcare preferences with your:
  - Medical Treatment Decision Maker;
  - GP/Doctor and healthcare team;
  - Family, friends and Support Person.
- Tell them what is important to you.

#### **P:** Put it on paper

- If there is something you feel strongly about, you should write it down in your Advance Care Directive.
- This makes sure your preferences are known.
- You may want to do this if you have no one to appoint as your Medical Treatment Decision Maker.
- Any time you go to hospital, you should take your Advance Care Directive with you to ensure that your wishes are known.
- It is also important to communicate any changes to your preferences to your Medical Treatment Decision Maker, Support Person and health care providers.

## How to get started?

The best way to start your Advance Care Planning is to speak to your GP.

Template Advance Care Planning forms can also be accessed via:

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/patient-care/end-of-life-care/advance-care-planning/acp-forms>

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