



Advance care planning

What is it?

Advance care planning involves making a plan for your future medical care. If one day you are too unwell to make decisions or communicate, your doctors can refer to your plan.

The plan can include as much detail as you like about your health goals, wishes, and values.

The planning process also involves writing a legal document, called an Advance Care Directive (ACD). The directive should include specific details about medical treatments and resuscitation.

Advance care planning gives you control over your health. It's a way of making sure your care team respect your wishes in the future.

What will my GP do now?

Your GP has already discussed advance care planning with you. You will need to have a few talks with your GP about your wishes.

Over the coming weeks and months, you and your GP will discuss:

- Your understanding of your health currently
- What might happen with your care and health needs in the future
- What's important to you to feel in control of your future care
- What might happen if your treatment doesn't go to plan
- Your past experiences with illness
- Any concerns or fears you have about your current and future health care
- Any support you are receiving at home
- Your thoughts on resuscitation
- Your wishes about what will happen after you die

Your GP may also ask you to complete a form for the NSW Ambulance Service.

This form lets the ambulance know what medications and treatments they can provide if called.

What can I do?

Continue to think about and write your plan. Make notes, speak to others, and chat with your GP about your options.

Your plan should include:

- Values and life goals
- Wishes for your different future health scenarios
- Instructions about your care if a life-threatening illness or injury occurs
- Your Enduring Guardian or Person Responsible

When your plan is complete, you will need to share it with your GP. You should also share your plan with family, close friends and anyone else involved in your care or legal matters.

Remember: You can change or cancel your plan, goals or preferences at any time.

Legal definitions

Advance Care Planning

The process of planning for your future health care if you are one day unable to make decisions or communicate

Advance Care Directive

A legal document stating the treatment actions to take if you are not able to make decisions

Palliative Care Plan

A resuscitation plan which is shared with NSW Ambulance

Enduring Guardian or Person Responsible

Someone who makes medical decisions for you if you can't speak for yourself



What questions could I ask my doctor?

- What should my plan include?*
- Who needs to see my plan?*
- How long does my plan need to be?*
- Will you give me advice about my plan?*
- Where do I keep my plan?*
- Where do I keep my plan?*
- What if I want to change my plan?*
- How do I know if my plan is 'finished'?*
- What happens if my plan changes without my knowledge?*



What supports are available?

Speak to your GP about supports to help with your advance care planning. You may also consider using a form to make sure nothing is missed. We will list the forms here.

The 'My Wishes' Advance Care Planning Program provides support and education in developing an Advance Care Plan.

Where can I learn more?

If you'd like to read more about advance care planning, the following resource list can help:

- NSW Government – Advance Care Planning: Making Your Wishes Known: health.nsw.gov.au
- Planning Ahead Tools: planningaheadtools.com.au
- SA Government – Respecting Patient Choices: Advance Care Yarning: pallcare.asn.au
- Advance Care Planning Australia: advancecareplanning.org.au
- South Western Sydney Local Health District – My Wishes (Advance Care Planning Program): swslhd.health.nsw.gov.au