

Advance Care Planning

What is advance care planning?

Making decisions about future healthcare is also known as advance care planning. Advance care planning can help inform those closest to you how to make healthcare decisions on your behalf should you be unable to make those decisions for yourself. This process may involve thinking and talking about complex and sensitive issues. Use this factsheet to help articulate thoughts or questions that you may have about advance care planning.

Advance care planning involves:

- thinking and talking about your values, preferences and preferred outcomes
- appointing a substitute decision-maker
- completing an Advance Care Directive and sharing it with others

Understanding your views about medical treatment

Your past experiences and current beliefs can shape your views about medical treatment. You may have had an experience with a family member or friend who was faced with a decision about medical care near the end of life. This may have been a difficult experience for you and led you to have certain views regarding what kinds of medical treatments you may or may not want in the future.

- Have you or anyone else you know had a positive or a difficult experience with healthcare?
- Are there things that you wish could have been done differently?
- Are there any medical treatments that you have experienced or seen others experience that influence your views?
- Do you have any questions about these that you wish to ask your doctor?
- If you couldn't make your own treatment decisions, who would you want to have make them?

We're here to help

For more information about advance care planning, contact our Specialist Support Team on 1300 881 698 or email support@pancare.org.au.

Information provided by the Pancare Foundation is not a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, treatment, or other health care services. Pancare Foundation may provide information to you about physicians, products, services, clinical trials, or treatments related to pancreatic cancer, but Pancare Foundation does not recommend nor endorse any healthcare resource if not specified.

Your health today and into the future

You may be healthy now, or you may be experiencing health problems. It is worth thinking about your health while keeping in mind the things that you value, goals you may want to achieve and the place of spirituality in your life.

- Thinking about your health now, are there any significant health problems that concern you?
- How may the qualities of your life that you value, and your beliefs about religion or spirituality, affect your choice of medical treatments?
- You may have thoughts on the kinds of health problems that could affect you in the future. The medical treatments that you choose may also be based upon your values and goals.
- What short or long-term goals do you have?
- If you are receiving medical treatment, how might the treatment help or prevent you from accomplishing these goals?

Preparing an Advance Care Directive

Consideration of the above questions will help inform the development of your Advance Care Directive. An Advance Care Directive becomes invaluable when you find yourself in a position where you can no longer speak for yourself. It provides your decisions-makers and treating team with the information they need to articulate your wishes in relation to your healthcare preferences and personal Choices.

Advance Care Planning Australia (ACPA)

ACPA is a national program funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, enabling Australians to make the best choices for their life and health care. They have a range of additional valuable resources, information and forms to help you with your advance care planning.

ACPA run the National Advance Care Planning Advisory Service contactable on 1300 208 582 who you can call for help with any advance care planning questions, 9am - 5pm (AEST) Monday to Friday.

advancecareplanning.org.au