

# Advance care planning

Registered Charity 512394



**Severn  
Hospice**

here and at home

## What is advance care planning?

**At its simplest, it is planning for your future care.**

Your plan will set out your preferences and your choices and its most important element is the discussion you have with others in drawing it up.

Talk to those who are providing your care – healthcare professionals, family, the manager at your home – about your wishes, your beliefs, your values.

## Why do I need to plan?

If you are living with a serious illness there may come a time when you are too unwell or unable to make decisions or communicate your wishes.

Your advance care plan is the guide for others who are providing your care and treatment.

If a partner or family members are involved in your care it will help them too.

## What do I need to think about?

Your plan can cover a huge area of practical, emotional, clinical and spiritual considerations.

**These headlines can help you start the discussion:**

- Currently in your life, what is important to you?
- What elements of care are important to you and what would you like to happen in the future?

- What would you NOT want to happen?
- Is there anything that you worry about or fear happening?
- Who would speak for you? A nominated proxy spokesperson or someone to whom you have given legally a lasting power of attorney for health and well-being?
- Will you want to refuse treatment or resuscitation? You can confirm your wishes with a special form – ReSPECT – that you keep with you
- If your condition deteriorates where would you like to be cared for?

## What is ReSPECT?

It stands for Recommended Summary Plan for Emergency Care and Treatment, and since November 2019 is the best way for you to tell healthcare professionals what you would like to happen to you in an emergency situation.

It is an approved and standardised form, now used nationally by all healthcare professionals, which lets you personalise the clinical care you want to receive in an emergency and when you are unable to decide for yourself or communicate your wishes.

With ReSPECT you can make it clear how you want to balance your care and comfort against clinical interventions.

Your ReSPECT form stays with you and is yours to share wherever you are being cared for. It will include your DNAR declaration (do not attempt resuscitation) and sit alongside an ADRT (advance decision to refuse treatment) if you have made these.

If you are caring for someone or have a lasting power of attorney for health and well-being for someone, advance care planning will help you understand the person's wishes.

# How do I put all this into a plan?

These simple steps can help guide you:

**Think** – what do you want to happen – or not to happen – if you become unwell?

**Talk** – discuss what's important to you with others

**Record** – write down your thoughts as to your own advance care plan, including details of who has your power of attorney or is your spokesperson. Have you completed a ReSPECT form?

**Discuss** – make sure others, especially people involved in your care, are included in your planning

**Share** – who needs to know what's in your plan, are your health records up to date? You should review your advance care plan regularly

## What happens if I change my mind?

Your plan isn't set in stone and you should always review it regularly. Changes to an advance care plan are quite common. Write your changes down and make sure those involved in your care are aware of what's different.

## What happens if I don't make an advance care plan?

No one is obliged to make an advance care plan but it can help you – and those caring for you – if you have taken the time to consider one.

Healthcare professionals can still care for you and will be able to make decisions they consider are in your best interests and for your benefit.

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