

## Things to remember

- Entering into discussions is entirely voluntary. The only legally binding decision some people wish to make is an Advanced Decision to Refuse Treatment.
- Any decision you make can be changed by you at any time.
- Your health condition can change and this can influence your ongoing decisions.

## Useful terms to discuss and understand

- Advance care planning: (ACP) process of thinking ahead and deciding what plans you want for the future
- Do Not Attempt Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (DNAR)
- Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (ADRT)
- Lasting Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare (LPA)
- Treatment Escalation Plans eg. ReSPECT:  
[www.respectprocess.org.uk](http://www.respectprocess.org.uk)

If you or your family wish to discuss your thoughts or wishes or would like some clarity about medical decisions and the plan of care, do feel that you can speak to your health care professionals.

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to give feedback about your care.

**Email:** [BSCCG.feedback@nhs.net](mailto:BSCCG.feedback@nhs.net) or

**Telephone:** 01225 831717

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# PLANNING AHEAD

## A GUIDE FOR PATIENTS, FAMILIES AND CARERS

This information leaflet is a guide to support planning ahead and advance care planning discussions. It can support patients with a life limiting condition and their families, who wish to consider their wishes and preferences for the future.

**We all deserve the opportunity to consider  
what is important to us.**

In life we prepare for many things – birth, education, marriage and retirement. We may also wish to prepare for a time of failing health and approaching end of life.

There may come a time when we lose our capacity to make decisions but would want our wishes known.

It can be difficult to discuss such issues, but for some patients and families, this may be very important. Having a clear sense of someone's wishes and doing as much as possible to plan ahead can give someone the freedom to get on with living now.

Medical, nursing and care teams will be able to give you guidance and advice as you start to think about these things. This can help you feel less overwhelmed about the number and sometimes difficult decisions you might need or wish to make.

Talking about your wishes for future care and writing down your preferences can help those who care for you understand what is important to you. This can inform your care plan and make sure that your preferences and wishes for future care are known and understood by your care team, should you ever be in a position that you cannot tell them yourself.

## **Discussions that may be helpful**

### **Understanding your illness or condition**

- What is the nature of your illness or condition
- What to expect in the future in relation to your illness or condition

- Sharing the uncertainty of the situation - very often it is difficult to predict the course of someone's illness and you may wish to discuss this with healthcare professionals
- Your thoughts about treatment or future medical care.

### **Understanding and planning for your future care**

- Options about where you might wish to be looked after
- Care that may be available to help you stay at home
- Care provided by nursing homes and residential homes
- Some people like to talk about where they would like to be cared for towards the end of their life
- Who you would like involved in your care
- You may wish to consider attending to decisions such as Lasting Power of Attorney, Advance Decisions to Refuse Treatment, or making a will.

### **Personal wishes**

- Wishes and preferences – these are wishes that are personal to you as an individual. They may include anything that you feel is particularly important to you and your family
- The name of a person you wish to be consulted on your behalf. If you do not have family close by this could be a friend or someone from a local advocacy service. Please ask for details about the service in your area
- Any particular religious, spiritual or cultural beliefs that you may have and you would like to make known.