

THINKING AHEAD: ADVANCE CARE PLANNING



As a Peter Mac patient, you will need to make many decisions about your treatment and healthcare. If you were very sick and could not talk, how would your doctors and family know what you want?

What is advance care planning?

Advance care planning (ACP) means to think, plan, and write down your wishes for your future health care.

It can be hard to know what might happen in the future. Think about the following questions:

- If you were very unwell, who would talk for you?
- How would they know what medical decisions to make for you?

Sharing your values and preferences with your loved ones and your doctors helps them to respect your choices.

From the time of your diagnosis, it is important that you think about **Advance Care Planning**.

Why should I do advance care planning?

Writing down your values and choices is a good way to let people know what is most important to you.

The laws about Medical Treatment Planning and Decisions change in March 2018.

Under the new laws, people can make two types of advance directives:

1. An **Instructional Directive** that –
 - is binding, which means that health professionals must follow it. It states which medical treatments you consent to, or refuse.
2. A **Values Directive** that –
 - explains your healthcare wishes and values
 - is not binding, but must be considered.

A guide to advance care planning

Appoint someone you trust to make decisions for you if you are too unwell to make them yourself. Under the new laws, this person is called a **Medical Treatment Decision Maker**.

This person was previously known as a Medical Power of Attorney. If you have **no** appointed Medical Treatment Decision Maker and cannot make decisions because you are too sick, then the doctors will choose a person to make decisions for you from a list of people like your partner, child or parent.

Chat and Communicate

Thinking and talking about what is important to you will help your Medical Treatment Decision Maker or family make the best decision for you.

Some people want to be kept alive for as long as possible. Others may only want medical treatment if they have a good chance of a high quality of life after treatment. Everybody is different.

Discuss what might happen with your cancer in the future. Your doctor or nurse will be very happy to talk to you about the sorts of treatment options that are available to you.

Put it on paper

You can write down your values, beliefs, and healthcare preferences. You can write down what treatment(s) you would want, and would not want.

If you write down your wishes in advance care planning documents, we will put them in your medical record to make sure your wishes are known and respected. If you need help filling out the documents please let our staff know.

Remember: It is important to give a copy of your completed documents to:

- your Medical Treatment Decision Maker (was Medical Power of Attorney)
- your family
- your doctors
- any hospital you usually attend,
- any team which helps look after you.

You can also upload a copy of any advance care planning documents to your “My Health Record” advance care planning section.

For a copy of Advance Care Planning forms and more information, see the links below.

So what do you do now?

A..C..P..

1. **A**ppoint someone to act as your medical treatment decision maker.
2. **C**hat and communicate
Talk about your health care values and preferences to your Medical Treatment Decision Maker, doctors, and family.
3. **P**ut the information about your medical treatment decisions on paper as an **instructional** or **values** directive.



Important information

For more information about Advance Care Planning and forms, please visit:

- www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au
- www.health.vic.gov.au/acp
- Advancecareplanning.org.au
- www.petermac.org/services/treatment/advance-care-planning

Or speak to your:

- GP (General Practitioner)
- Your Peter Mac doctor or nurse
- Your Peter Mac Social Worker.

In the event of an emergency, please dial **000** for an ambulance or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.