

## ADVANCE CARE PLAN: Information Sheet (Western Australia)

The Respecting Patient Choices Program is promoting advance care planning in Western Australia.. The program aims to encourage individuals to make their own decisions about health care. You have the right to make decisions about your health care, now and for the future. Medical treatment should only be given with your fully informed consent and you have the right to refuse treatment. If, in the future, you become unable to express your choices for treatment, your doctors and family/friends may not know what you would want. An Advance Care Plan gives you the opportunity to record your choices about medical treatment. An Advance Care Plan ONLY comes into consideration if you lose capacity to make decisions about your medical treatment.

The two essential components of an Advance Care Plan are:

1. Documenting your wishes in the Statement of Choices
2. Discussing your wishes with your doctor and your family or significant others.

Before completing the Advance Care Plan, take time to read the following information carefully. It is important that you discuss your values and beliefs and the content of this Advance Care Plan with the person in your family or a significant other person with whom you have a close relationship. It is important that this person understands and respects your choices.

### 1. **Discussing your choices with a family member or significant other person**

It is important to choose someone who:

- You trust and who knows you well
- Is willing to respect your views and values
- Is able to help with decisions under circumstances that may be difficult or stressful.

The law in Western Australia states that certain people can give consent on behalf of another person if that person is incapable of doing so themselves (Guardianship and Administration Act 1990). The person who may give consent is the first in order of priority of the following:

1. a guardian
2. your spouse or de facto partner
3. a person who on a regular basis provides or arranges for domestic services and support to you but does not receive remuneration for doing so
4. your nearest relative (other than spouse or de facto partner) who maintains a close personal relationship with you
5. any other person who maintains a close relationship with you

It may be that you have a spouse or de facto but you feel that they may not be the best person to discuss your wishes with. If you discuss your wishes with another person then this person will not have legal authority to make decisions for you, ie your spouse or de facto will have this authority. In this case, you need to discuss your wishes with a person who will be in a position to advise your spouse or de facto if you need medical treatment. Ideally your spouse or de facto will be aware of what your wishes are.

If you chose not to discuss your wishes with anyone then if you become unable to make or communicate decisions for yourself, any decisions that need to be made may be made by the person on the above list. Your doctor will make these decisions for you if urgent treatment is needed if it is not practicable to obtain that consent from the person on the list.

## 2. The Statement of Choices

You may choose to record your wishes regarding future medical treatments on the *Statement of Choices* form. It is still most important to discuss your wishes with your family and doctor. You should note that the Statement of Choices is designed to inform your family and the doctors of your medical treatment wishes. If you become unable to make decisions this information will assist them in making decisions that are in your best interests.

### How do I change or revoke my Advance Care Plan?

There are a number of reasons why you might want to change your Statement of Choices. Your medical and other circumstances or wishes may have changed. You can change or revoke these documents verbally or in writing or by destroying them, or requesting that they be destroyed. You can also revoke these documents by completing a new document. It is also important to inform your doctor and family of the changes and provide them with new documents.

**After completing the Advance Care Plan** the original remains with you and certified copies can be given or sent to:

- your family and significant others
- your local doctor (GP)
- the medical records department at the organisation where you have completed the documents
- other hospitals/clinics you normally attend (with a covering explanatory letter)

You may wish to share extra copies with others (eg. next of kin, your minister or your solicitor).

### Process for making certified copies of your Advance Care Plan

To make a certified copy, do the following: 'To each page of the copy, other than the last page, the person certifying must add at the bottom "This is a true and complete copy of the corresponding page of the original" and then sign and date it. On the last page, the person certifying must add "This is a true and complete copy of the original" and then sign and date it.'

### Need further information?

If you need assistance in completing this document or would like more information please contact a Respecting Patient Choices Consultant:

Name

Telephone

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