Restthaven
Incorporated

Advance Care Planning

Choices for Your Future

Information to raise awareness of the various available options for future care.

Advance Care Planning

Planning ahead should you be unable to make your own decisions.

Many people prefer to have a say in their future. There are a number of ways you can plan ahead to indicate to others your preferences and what you want to have happen to you should you be unable to make your own decisions. This may be either because you may not have the mental capacity or you may be unwell and you cannot speak for yourself. These decisions are called **Advance Directives**.

You can only complete the associated important documents whilst you have mental capacity and can make an informed decision. Mental capacity means you are able to understand both the nature and the intention of the documents and the consequences of your decisions. Advance Directives are outlined below.

Advance Directives fall into three different categories:

- **Your finances and legal matters**
- **Your lifestyle or care (including medical treatments)**
- **Your medical treatment decisions only**

Finances and Legal Matters

General Power of Attorney

This is a legal document that gives another person that you have specified, the authority to make financial or legal decisions on your behalf. You can change this authority at any time. To revoke the document it must be in writing. Power of Attorney ceases should you lose mental capacity.

Enduring Power of Attorney

This is a legal document that you must complete whilst you have mental capacity. It can be time specific or to come into operation if and when you no longer have mental capacity. It has the same powers as a general Power of Attorney.

Lifestyle and Care

Enduring Power of Guardianship

This is a legal document that gives another person, specified by you, the authority to make personal lifestyle decisions (such as which Aged Care Facility you may be admitted to) if you are not able to make these decisions for yourself. This person can also make medical decisions, unless another person has been appointed by you to be your 'Medical Agent' (see Medical Agent).

In addition, you are able to document how you may or may not wish to be cared for. This includes what medical treatments you may or may not want, should you be unable to make decisions for yourself.

Medical Treatment Decisions

Medical Power of Attorney

This is a form that may be completed in relation to your individual wishes and preferences regarding your medical treatment. There are two parts to the form; **Medical Agent** and **Anticipatory Direction**. You can complete either or both sections.

Medical Agent

This is a person appointed by you to make decisions about your medical treatment when you no longer have the capacity to do so.

Anticipatory Direction

This form allows you to write down what medical treatments you want or do not want in relation to the final stages of having a terminal illness or if you are in a persistent unconscious state. You can revoke any of these decisions at any time whilst you still have mental capacity.

Treatment Guides

Treatment guides are other useful Advance Care Planning documents.

Statement of Choices

This can be used in emergencies. It is particularly of use when a person no longer has mental capacity. For example, you may be caring for someone with dementia and they are no longer able to make decisions for themselves. If you are their main carer and know what the person may have wanted for themselves, you can complete this form on their behalf.

Good Palliative Care Plan

This is used in the end of life stage. It is usually written by a doctor in consultation with family, medical agent or legally appointed guardian. It does not take the place of a legal Advanced Directive. Legal guardians and medical agents must show proof of their agency before being allowed to partake in the decision making process.

Important Considerations

- **Only persons over the age of 18 years can make these advance directives or be appointed as an Attorney or Guardian.**
- **If you have any doubts with medical decisions, consult your doctor.**
- **If you have any doubts about the legal processes, obtain legal advice.**
- **It is important to discuss your decisions with your family and/or carers to ensure that they understand your wishes.**

Advance Care Planning

All forms and information about Advance Care Planning are available free of charge from:

Adelaide Health Service
Respecting Patient Choices

9th Floor (9B) Palliative Care
28 Woodville Road, Woodville
Phone: 8222 8498 or 8342 8691
www.respectingpatientchoices.org.au

Medical Power of Attorney and Anticipatory Directions

Forms can be obtained *free of charge* from:

- **Palliative Care Council of South Australia**
  202 Greenhill Road, Eastwood
  www.pallcare.asn.au
  Email pallcare@pallcare.asn.au
  Phone 8291 4137 or 1800 660 055
- **Department of Health**
  www.health.sa.gov.au/consent
- **Office of the Public Advocate**
  Level 7, ABC Building,
  85 North East Road, Collinswood
  Phone 8342 8200

Enduring Power of Attorney and Enduring Power of Guardian

Forms can be *purchased* from:

- **Australia Post Offices**
- **Legal Services Commission Offices**
  at Adelaide, Elizabeth, Holden Hill,
  Mt Barker, Noarlunga, Port Adelaide and
  Whyalla.
  For advice on the content,
  phone 1300 366 424
- **Your own lawyer/solicitor**
- **Office of the Public Advocate**
  Level 7, ABC Building,
  85 North East Road, Collinswood
  Phone 8342 8200

For More Information

Resthaven provides this information to assist you. Please feel free to discuss your situation with the program manager or coordinator if you need further clarification or assistance.

Resthaven Incorporated
PO Box 327, Unley SA 5061
Phone 08 8373 0211
www.resthaven.asn.au

An Australian Government Initiative

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