



### How do I start Advance Care Planning?

There are several steps you can take if you would like to begin your advance care plan.

**THINK** about what's right for you in the final months or days of your life.

**LEARN** about your medical condition and medical procedures. Some medical procedures and treatments may improve your quality of life, others may not.

**CHOOSE** your decision maker, the person who will make medical decisions for you when you cannot make them yourself.

**TALK** about your wishes with family, close friends, your doctor and healthcare providers.

**RECORD** your wishes in writing, on video, or in any manner you choose.

**UPDATE** your record when you change your wishes.

### On-line resources include:

**Speak up:** Canada's National Campaign for Advance Care Planning  
<http://www.advancecareplanning.ca/>

Ontario Seniors' Secretariat  
<http://www.gov.on.ca/mczcr/seniors/>

A Guide to Advance Care Planning:  
<http://www.seniors.gov.on.ca/en/advancedcare/>

*If you want to name a person to make decisions on your behalf, this is called an Attorney for Personal Care in Ontario; your request must be made in writing.*

Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee  
<http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca>

Advocacy Centre for the Elderly  
<http://www.advocacycentreelderly.org>

Consent and Capacity Board  
<http://www.ccboard.on.ca>

Developed by the East Toronto Health Link Advance Care Planning Working Group January 2014.

Adapted from the Centre for Clinical Ethics (a shared service of Providence Healthcare, St. Joseph's Health Centre & St. Michael's Hospital)



## Advance Care Planning Information Guide

*A gift for you and your family*

**HealthLink**  
East Toronto Health Link  
Let's make healthy change happen

**Alice D'Souza** has a history of strokes in her family. She has strong opinions about how she would like to be cared for if she were to experience a serious stroke.

**Sean O'Reilly** has lived a fiercely independent life. Although he is 90 years old and has recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, he lives in his own home and wants to continue to do so, despite concerns raised by his children about his safety.

**Lilly Palma** has strong religious views and believes that "where there's life, there's hope." If she were to become unconscious, she would want to continue receiving all treatments to live as long as possible.

In all these situations, each person has stated in general terms their wishes for future care. These are helpful, but are only a beginning.

This guide provides general information about Advance Care Planning.

*"Advance Care Planning is like retirement planning, important to start early, even if you don't need it for many years to come."*

**Healthcare Provider**

### **What is Advance Care Planning?**

Advance Care Planning is about making choices now, about how you wish to be cared for in the future.

It's about choosing the person who will make medical decisions for you when you cannot make decisions for yourself.

### **Why is Advance Care Planning important?**

There may come a time when you will not be able to tell your doctor what medical treatment you want: for example, if you have a sudden heart attack or gradually lose your ability to communicate as with Alzheimer's disease.

Advance Care Planning can help you receive the kind of care that you want in the final months and days of your life. Research shows that when your family knows your wishes, they worry less and feel at peace because you are receiving the care you wanted.

### **What kind of choices can be made?**

You can make choices about any personal care matter, including healthcare and living arrangements.

### **How can these choices be communicated?**

You can state your wishes by:

- talking to your family, close friends and doctor;
- writing them down;
- putting them in a video or recording.

- Be sure, to tell your chosen decision maker, family, friends, doctor and lawyer about your future wishes for healthcare.

### **Can you change your mind about your choices?**

**YES.**

Your wishes for healthcare may change over time, especially if your health changes. Remember to tell your chosen decision maker, family, close friends, doctor and lawyer about the changes.

### **When does your Advance Care Plan come into effect?**

When you are no longer able to make your own treatment decisions.

### **Does your Advance Care Plan need to be followed?**

**YES.**

However, your doctor will follow your advance care wishes only when you can't make your own healthcare decisions. When your chosen decision maker is available, your doctor will talk to him or her to get consent to follow your advance care wishes. In an emergency situation where your chosen decision maker is not available, your doctor is permitted to follow your wishes as expressed in your advance care plan.