

## Palliative Care

Palliative care aims to improve the quality of life of patients and their families who are facing problems associated with life limiting illness, whether physical, psychological, social, or spiritual.

People can receive palliative care at any point after a life limiting diagnosis, sometimes alongside treatments, therapies and medicines aimed at controlling rather than curing the illness, such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy. Some people receive palliative care for years.

### **What does palliative care do?**

- Offers support to help people live as actively as possible for as long as possible.
- Provides support to help the family cope during the person's illness.
- Provides a team approach from the local GP surgery and sometimes the local hospice to address the needs of people and their families.
- Helps to manage any symptoms such as pain.
- Integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of care.
- Supports people to retain control of their life through help with planning ahead and discussing what matters most to them.
- Supports people at the end of life.

### **Planning ahead/ Future Care Planning**

There is a lot to consider when planning for the future, especially in the context of a long-term illness such as cancer, or if coping with any progressive, life-limiting illness which will shorten your life.

There are practical decisions and several choices available that you may not have previously needed to consider. It is up to you how much you wish to plan and what aspects, and whom you communicate your wishes to. Try to start with what matters most or what is most important to you right now.

Hospice UK has [planning ahead information](#) and also an [online tool](#) for those who would like a step-by-step guide to thinking about what matters most.

**Things you may wish to consider.**

**Making a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)**, allows an appointed person that you have chosen, to legally make decisions regarding your health and welfare if you are unable to make or communicate a decision in the future. You can apply for this via the following link,

[Office of the Public Guardian](#)

**Writing an Advance Statement**, this is a form that lets you record your wishes, feelings, beliefs and values, which can be used in the future if you lack the capacity to make or are unable to communicate your wishes. By writing an Advance Statement you will give those around you (your family, carers, and healthcare team) a clear idea of what you want if you cannot tell them. To read more about and print off a PDF version of an Advanced Statement template, please use the following link,

[advance-statement-v2.1.pdf \(compassionindying.org.uk\)](#)

**Making an Advanced Decision to Refuse Treatment (ADRT)**, we all have a right to refuse medical treatments provided we have full mental capacity. An ADRT is a legal document that allows you to refuse any medical treatment, even if doing that puts your life at risk. By making an Advanced Decision (also known as a living will), if in the future you lack the capacity to make, or are unable to communicate decisions, your health care team will know what treatment you don't want. The document needs to be signed in front of a witness for it to be valid. For more information and to make an ADRT online use the following link,

[Make an advance decision \(living will\) | Compassion in Dying](#)

If you would prefer to complete a pdf version, use the following link, [advance-decision-pack-v2.3.pdf \(compassionindying.org.uk\)](#)

**For more information about Palliative care and access to support see the following links**

- [Palliative Care & Cancer Liaison + Bereavement Group - Dartmouth Caring](#)
- Dartmouth Caring 01803 834384
- [Dartmouth Medical Practice \(dartmedical.co.uk\)](#)
- [Planning for the Future Hub | Rowcroft Hospice](#)
- [How we can Help | Rowcroft Hospice](#)
- Rowcroft Hospice Tel 01803 210800
- Marie Curie support line - Call free on 0800 090 2309, or click on this link to [book a call](#).
- Marie Curie online chat line [How to use Marie Curie's online support chat service](#)  
Both open 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday, and 11am – 5pm on Saturdays
  
- [Living with a terminal illness | Marie Curie](#)
- [Information and support \(mariecurie.org.uk\)](#)
- [Caring for someone with a terminal illness \(mariecurie.org.uk\)](#)
- [When someone dies \(mariecurie.org.uk\)](#)