

# Planning for my future priorities

Planning ahead is important, whether you have a serious illness or not. This is because none of us can know for sure that we will always be able to make our own decisions about our care or finances.

It is also important because it is not always possible for health care professionals to know exactly how you would like to be cared for in certain situations. Even your closest family and friends may not know exactly how and where you would wish to be cared for. This might mean you are not cared for in the place or way you would have chosen.

You can also plan how you will manage your financial affairs. This could include paying bills, accessing your money or who can do this if you can no longer manage.

If you plan your care in advance, there is more chance that your care will be right for you. Planning ahead can also help you feel more in control of your life. You will still be able to alter your plans if you change your mind later.

## How you can plan ahead

- Tell people your wishes and what matters to you. You could also write them down.
- Writing a will means that your wishes are carried out after you die. It can also make sure your family and friends are provided for in the way you want. Making a will is easier to do when you are feeling well.
- If you live in England or Wales, you could consider making a legal document called a Lasting Power of Attorney. The document lets you choose someone to make decisions for you. There are 2 types, one that covers your finances and property and another that covers your health and care.
- If you live in Scotland the legal document is called Power of Attorney. There are 3 types, one covering your finances, a second covering your health and care and a third that combines both.
- People living in Northern Ireland can make a legal document called an Enduring Power of Attorney. This allows someone you trust to make decisions on your behalf. These decisions might be about managing your property and financial affairs.
- You can write down your wishes about any treatments you do not want to have in the future. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland these are called advanced decisions to refuse treatment (ADRT). It is sometimes known as a living will. In Scotland they are called advance directives.
- You might want to write down your wishes about organ donation.
- You may want to be involved in planning your own funeral. It is also possible to pay for it in advance.
- If you need help planning ahead, you can talk to a healthcare professional. This could be your GP, specialist nurse or a social worker.
- If you can, it is helpful to involve people who are close to you such as your family and friends. They may be able to help you to plan ahead. It will also help them know your wishes so they can make sure they are carried out.

**Local resources:**

Resource	Contact details

**National resources:**

Resource	Contact details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maggie's Centres</li> <li>• Citizens Advice</li> <li>• The Law Society of England and Wales</li> <li>• The Law Society of Northern Ireland</li> <li>• The Law Society of Scotland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.maggiescentres.org">www.maggiescentres.org</a> Tel 0300 123 1801</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk">www.citizensadvice.org.uk</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://www.lawsociety.org.uk">www.lawsociety.org.uk</a> Tel 0207 242 1222</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.lawsoc-ni.org">www.lawsoc-ni.org</a> Tel 0289 026 1614</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.lawscot.org.uk">www.lawscot.org.uk</a> Tel 0131 226 7411</li> </ul>

**Further information**

[www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/organising/planning-for-the-future-with-advanced-cancer](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/organising/planning-for-the-future-with-advanced-cancer)

Our booklets and leaflets are available to order free on [be.macmillan.org.uk](http://be.macmillan.org.uk)

- **Your life and your choices: plan ahead** (England and Wales; Scotland; Northern Ireland)
- **Coping with advanced cancer**

**More information and support**

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm, or visit [macmillan.org.uk](http://macmillan.org.uk)

Deaf or hard of hearing? Call using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app. Speak another language? Telephone interpreters are available. Please tell us in English the language you would like to use.

We produce information in a range of formats and languages. To order these visit [macmillan.org.uk/otherformats](http://macmillan.org.uk/otherformats) or call our support line.