

Is it a legal document?

No. There may be times where a clinical decision is made that takes precedence over the advance care plan. However, all clinical staff will do their utmost to adhere to your plan and your wishes.

Is an advance care plan the same as a treatment escalation plan or an advanced decision to refuse treatment?

No. Treatment escalation plans (TEPs) and advanced decisions to refuse treatment (ADRT) are specifically about medical treatment and should be completed with a clinician, usually your GP. Your Marie Curie Companion may discuss these with you, but they will signpost you to your GP, or any specialists you may be seeing, to get them completed.

Will making an advanced care plan affect my care now?

No. Taking this step to plan doesn't have anything to do with your current needs. It's about considering the future and what you might want at the end of your life. Your advance care plan is not a current care plan or assessment of needs. If this is something you need, please speak to your GP or Adult Social Care on **0300 123 2224**.

How can I find out more about this?

Contact your local Marie Curie Companions service

Call **0800 304 7412**

Email lat.mccompanionservice@nhs.net

Visit mariecurie.org.uk/companions

If you'd like to provide feedback or make a complaint, visit mariecurie.org.uk/complaints

Thank you to everyone who supports us and makes our work possible. To find out how we can help or to make a donation, visit mariecurie.org.uk

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**Talking
now can make
life better at
the end**

**Questions you might have about
advance care planning**

Supported by



Do I need an *advance care plan*?

Advance care plans are for anyone who's thinking about the future and wants to get organised. Much like planning for a wedding, baby or holiday, making sure your wishes and preferences are clear when it comes to the end of your life can reduce stress and help you to feel more in control.

We're all unique individuals, and a good end of life and death will be different for all of us. Some people may prefer to be at home with family present, or alone with their dog on the bed and their favourite records playing. Others might prefer to be in a hospice with their favourite book being read to them.

Many people choose to put together an advance care plan because they have a life-limiting or terminal illness. But much like a Will, it can be done at any time of life to bring peace of mind. You can also revisit it to update it whenever you choose to.

Why is it worth doing one?

There are two big advantages to having an advance care plan. Firstly, thinking about what you want your end of life to be like, and documenting those preferences ahead of time, makes it more likely they'll be understood by loved ones and healthcare professionals when the time comes.

Secondly, having a plan in place will support your circle of concern to make decisions for you if you're unable to.

While we assume people might know what we want, in reality it's hard enough to pick an outfit for someone else and hope it is the right choice. Making big decisions on a loved one's behalf can be stressful and cause conflicts when more than one person is involved. Having your wishes clearly documented takes away some of that stress at what will be a difficult time for those closest to you.

Can Marie Curie help me create a plan?

Yes. A trained Marie Curie Companion can come to your home, or another place of your choosing, and complete an advance care plan with you. Our Companions complete the same safety checks and training that all Marie Curie staff undertake, so you'll be in safe and capable hands.

Is it okay to have other people with me during the appointment?

Yes, of course. Part of advance care planning is about talking to the people around you who care about you, whether that's family, friends, church groups or neighbours – so please include others if you'd like to. Alternatively, you may wish to complete your advance care plan with your Marie Curie Companion first, and share the information with your loved ones afterwards. The choice is yours.

What will the Marie Curie Companion ask me when completing my plan?

Your companion will send you a copy of the plan in advance of the appointment, so you can have a look through all the questions and start thinking about your answers. They will ask you about what and who is important to you, your beliefs, what you enjoy, the things you dislike, your routines and your way of life. Discussing and recording these things now means your wishes and preferences are more likely to be met by the people caring for you in future.

What happens to my plan once I've made it?

Once your plan is completed, we'll:

- send you a copy by recorded delivery to be stored in a safe place
- ask you if you'd like further copies sent out to your circle of concern, such as siblings and children, and arrange for these to be sent out
- upload your advance care plan onto a clinical database called SDeR that most medical professionals in Somerset have access to, meaning your GP will be able to see this information, as well as hospital doctors.