

# Advance Death Care Plan

for a funeral and disposition (short form)

An Advance Death Care Plan is a special one-off document, dedicated to ones nearest and dearest.

At least one important purpose is to tie up a few loose ends because we believe

**some things are too important to be left unsaid.**

It provides us with the opportunity to have an

after-death plan that is in keeping with our values,

This is a time for reflection. Don't rush. Talk it over with  
family and friends. Return to the Plan when you feel ready.

Since beliefs, ideas and feelings change depending on circumstances,  
new insights and the passage of time, it might be best to complete each section in pencil,  
thus permitting periodic updates and amendments.

## When my body dies ...

It is my preference that the after-death care of my body be handled by:

- ❖ My family and friends at home, or a variation thereof.
- ❖ A funeral services provider, in consultation with my family / friends.
- ❖ I am donating my body to science.

I would like my funeral arrangements to be in accordance with those of my beliefs:

- ❖ Buddhist      Christian      Humanist      Jewish      Muslim      Other

I would like my body to be held in one of the following containers:

- ❖ Shroud and/or Pine box
- ❖ Traditional hard wood casket / coffin
- ❖ Bamboo / alternative casket
- ❖ Cardboard cremation casket
- ❖ Rental or reusable casket
- ❖ Other (state): .....
- ❖ No preference

Decorated by family and friends: Yes / No

I would like to spend/ my family to spend, no more than \$ ..... on my casket / shroud / rental casket;  
and in the range of \$ ..... for my funeral and memorial.

To my next-of-kin

*This document is a written record of my personal wishes  
for funeral services and the disposition of my remains.*

Produced by the Dying Choices Network in association with Die-alogue Café

<http://diealoguecafe.wordpress.com/>

1<sup>st</sup> edition, February 2015

Printed on tree-free chlorine free paper made from 100% Bamboo pulp



## A general overview of my preferences

### Funeral provider: Choose A, B, C or D (or a combination as stated in an attachment).

A ..... I would like all the arrangements for my funeral to be handled by my family and friends, with the minimal involvement of commercial funeral service providers.

B ..... I would like all the arrangements for my funeral to be handled by my family and friends with the assistance of a Home Funeral services person or Death Midwife or Faith Leader or Secular Celebrant.

C ..... I would like all the arrangements for my funeral to be handled by a private funeral provider with only minimal involvement of my family in arranging my funeral and disposition.

D ..... I have a pre-paid funeral plan with: .....

A1 ..... The person/s, from within my circle of family / friends who I think would be the most capable of assisting my Death Care advocate / advisor in arranging this event, is/are:

Name: .....

Email: ..... Phone: .....

B1 ..... (If available in my area/town/city) I would like my family / friends to consider calling on the services of a Home Funeral agent or Faith Leader or Secular Celebrant:

.....  
to guide my family in the after-death care of my body and a vigil and funeral at home or some other suitably designated place.

Please nominate: .....

C1 ..... My preferred commercial funeral provider is / My pre-paid funeral plan is with:

Name: .....

Address: ..... Phone: .....

## Funeral service

I would like / *I would not like*, a funeral service, as part of the saying goodbye to my presence in this world. See **Notes** for further information about this section.

If there is to be any variation to this preference, then talking it over with family and friends will help explain what is meant and a notation can be attached to this Directive.

## Form of disposition

I would like: (number in order of preference)

- Aquamation ..... (see Notes)
- Cremation ..... (disposal by fire / burning)
- Burial ..... (cemetery); ..... (natural or conservation burial ground)
- Mausoleum/crypt ..... (interred according to my faith tradition)
- I have bequeathed my body to science. (Please find University papers and contacts attached)

## Body care / preparation / presentation

A ..... I would like my body to remain undisturbed for a period of ..... hours before being taken to the mortuary (preferably a public mortuary at a hospital).

B ..... During this time I would like the following practices to be observed by those in attendance

**Personal care of the body:**      Bathing /      Dressing /      Make-up /      Oils /      Other

**Clothing and make up:**      Clothes /      Jewelry /      Make-up /      Other

**Other practices / rituals:**      Chanting /      Praying /      Other

I would like my body to be dressed in the clothing listed below and that the family / death midwife / mortician be advised to this effect

C .... I have no preference, I am happy for my family to decide these things when the time comes.

I would **not** like my body to be embalmed unless there are special circumstances that make that necessary. If a viewing is requested then minimal cosmetic adjustments are acceptable.

### Viewing / Visits

I would like my body to lie in an open casket / coffin, on a cooling tray / stretcher for a viewing. I would be happy to have the following items placed around my body, as part of the mourning process. Yes / No

Candles /      Flowers /      Incense /      Photographs /      Mementos /      Other

### Body container

A .... I would like my deceased remains to be held on / placed in one of the following. Number in order of preference:

Shroud .....	(Wool / Bamboo / Linen / Hemp / Other)	Plain / Decorated
Shroud holder: .....	Stretcher or Trundle (trundle is a tray - a plain flat board with low edges)	
Box (Wooden) .....	(Pine / MDF / Solid timber / Other)	Plain / Decorated
Box (Woven) .....	(Bamboo / Wicker / Wool / Other)	Plain / Decorated
Box shape: Casket or Coffin	(Casket is rectangular with 4 sides / Coffin is tapered with 6 sides)	

Name of artist or skilled family / friend (if required) .....

B .... I would like my family to make or have made the shroud / casket / coffin.

C .... I would be happy for my family to purchase the item from a small private company.

D .... I would be happy for my family to purchase the item/s from a large corporate provider.

E .... I would be pleased if the container was a low cost simple item draped in a cherished family 'throw' i.e. a patchwork quilt; a favourite organisation emblem; a flag; a decorated cloth ....

### Transfer / Transportation

I would like my body to be carried from the place where it is attended to / prepared for disposal, to the place of the funeral service, and / or to the crematorium / cemetery in a: (Number in order)

Hearse ..... Van ..... Family vehicle ..... Other ..... No preference .....

### Funeral / Memorial / Disposition

A .... I do not wish to have a funeral (a service with the body present)

B .... I would prefer a memorial service be held at a suitable place after my death. My preference is:

.....  
(Consider: your home, church, temple, community hall, outdoors on public or private land, etc.)

I would like my funeral / memorial service to be presided by: Name and contact details ...

..... Phone: .....

I would like my funeral service to include the following:

Music /      Rituals /      Prayers /      Eulogy /      Other .....

I would like the eulogy to be written by ..... and

I have included information for the composing of this on a separate sheet/s.

I own / please purchase, a burial plot / cremation niche at: .....

I wish / I do not wish, my cremation to be witnessed: (If I wish, please list separately and attach)

This is what I would like to happen with the 'cremains' (ashes). This can include being held at home, scattered, manufactured into a special item (Please list separately and attach).

I request that these additional instructions be followed after my death. (Please list separately and attach).

## Death Certificate

The Executor (or her/his nominee) can fill in the application for a Death Certificate. Birth Certificate information can come in handy for this purpose (see attached copy). Other information can be sourced from family General Practitioner (GP) and so on. See this link to Births, Deaths and Marriages to download a copy of the application form.

<http://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-death-certificate>

[http://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au/bdm\\_dth/bdm\\_dct.html](http://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au/bdm_dth/bdm_dct.html)

## Declaration & Signatures

I am making it known that my requests about after-death care, funeral and disposition preferences as contained in this document, are being made while I am in a state of sound mind. I have made these decisions of my own free will, following consultation with relevant persons and authorities.

It is with my sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who will generously give of their time and energy to undertake these requests, that I now say my final thank yous.

Signed ..... Date .....

Printed name: .....

AKA (Nickname) .....

Address: .....

The witness signature below is to assure family members that this Advance Death Care Plan was written or acknowledged of my own free will and when I was of sound mind.

Witness signature ..... Date .....

Printed name ..... Phone .....

Address: .....

## Notes

**Aquamation:** This procedure uses the chemical process of *alkaline hydrolysis* – the natural way in which a body decomposes if placed in a flowing stream of water. A combination of flowing water, high temperature and alkalinity are used to accelerate the natural course of tissue hydrolysis and chemical breakdown. At the end of this short process, the body has been broken down into chemical form and dissolved into the water. The only similarity to traditional cremation is that the only solid remains are the bones which are then returned to the family as ashes, as with cremation. It is a far safer, greener alternative to cremation or burial. Aquamation produces no toxic air emissions, uses a fraction of the energy of traditional cremation, and has no wastage of timber. A casket or coffin is not used.

<http://www.aquamationindustries.com/>

**The funeral procedure:** Burials can be expensive; cremations cost slightly less. Total funeral expenditure may be far greater because added to the costs of the funeral itself is the price for headstones, memorials, and so on.

The cost of arranging a funeral can be reduced substantially by members of the deceased's family or friends arranging it themselves. (The law does not require the services of a funeral director or a minister, nor does it require a formal ceremony.) There is, obviously, no encouragement from the funeral industry for the "direct-it-yourself" approach. [The Law Handbook]

\*\* If there is a will that names an executor then they have custody and control of the body for the purpose of its disposal.

Next of kin or a friend can organise the funeral without necessarily becoming obliged to administer the dead person's affairs.... <http://www.lawhandbook.org.au/handbook/ch20s03s01.php>

Also useful: [http://www.legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/guides/wills\\_estates/arranging\\_a\\_funeral.html](http://www.legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/guides/wills_estates/arranging_a_funeral.html)

**Funeral service:** If the answer is ... *I would not like* ... then the way this is defined by the funeral industry is a *No Service, No Attendance (NSNA)* event where no one turns up and everything is out-sourced to a commercial funeral services provider. It could be considered a private funeral. Normally this would, by definition, mean that there is no funeral service, no viewing, no casket seen by the family, no flowers – nothing except the payment of an account and perhaps collection of 'cremains' (ashes) when the job is done. Many people choose this method because it saves money. Costs, however, can be reduced in many ways without resorting to doing a NSNA funeral i.e. Direct-It-Yourself; making your own coffin; etc.. An internet search will deliver examples of others who have chosen these methods.

*Be aware that funerals are for the living.*

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