

Advance Planning

Important documents for end-of-life (or for any age in life)

Advance Care Planning

Advance Care Planning is a process that helps you to plan for future medical care. This process involves thinking about your values and beliefs and your wishes about what medical care you would like to have if you cannot make your own decisions.

An important part of the planning process is to discuss your wishes with your family and other people who are close to you, as well as talking to your General Practitioner or other health professionals about any medical conditions you have.

You may also choose to write down your wishes in an Advance Health Care Directive (AHCD).

Enduring Guardian

The [Guardianship Act 1987 \(NSW\)](#) makes it possible for a person with capacity to appoint an Enduring Guardian. An Enduring Guardian can make decisions for you in areas such as accommodation, health and services, if you lose the capacity to make your own decisions at some time in the future. An Enduring Guardian cannot make decisions about your money or assets. You can make an [Enduring Power of Attorney](#) to appoint someone to manage your financial affairs.

The appointment of your Enduring Guardian takes effect only if you lose the capacity to make your own major personal decisions.

Power of Attorney

A Power of Attorney is a legal document appointing a person or trustee organisation of your choice, to manage your financial and legal affairs while you are alive. This person or organisation is then known as your attorney.

In order to make a valid Power of Attorney you must be 18 years or over and have the [capacity](#) to understand the nature and effect of the appointment.

Importance of a Power of Attorney

A Power of Attorney only deals with property and financial matters, and your attorney can sign legally binding documents on your behalf. You may, for instance, be travelling overseas and want to give your attorney access to your bank accounts to pay your bills or manage your finances. Alternatively, it can be useful to have a Power of Attorney if you become unwell and are no longer able to manage your financial affairs.

Making a Power of Attorney does not mean that you will lose control over your financial affairs. It simply gives your attorney formal authority to manage your financial affairs according to your instructions. Your Power of Attorney can be cancelled (revoked) at any time provided you have the capacity to do so.

It does not give someone the right to make decisions about your health, medical treatment or welfare. These decisions are covered by [Enduring Guardianship](#).

What is a Will

A Will is a legal document that sets out who you want to receive your assets (including jewellery or sentimental items), money and property when you die. Making a Will is the only way you can ensure your assets will be distributed according to your wishes when you die.

According to research 40%* of Australians do not have a valid Will. If you die without a Will (Intestate) your estate will be distributed according to a Government formula and, if your only living relatives are more distant than cousins, your estate will pass to the government. (*Newspoll May 2013)

Source: <http://www.planningaheadtools.com.au/>

Memorandum of Wishes

A Memorandum of Wishes is an opportunity for you to put into your own words how you want your assets to be dealt with and your beneficiaries to be treated after you die.

Unlike a Will it is not legally binding, however provides additional direction to the Trustee of your Testamentary or Family Trust. This video provides you with some guidance as to what you should consider when preparing your Memorandum of Wishes in conjunction with the preparation of your Will.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcdYsCGYY9s>

Advance Death Care Directive

A planning booklet for after-death care, funeral and disposition...

Before we make our final transition from this beautiful earth, there are many questions to ask and decisions to make:

- ~ Would you like a burial, cremation, an aquamation or be interred in a crypt?
- ~ Would you like a casket or a coffin and would you like to buy it or hire it or have one made to order; or would

you prefer a shroud?

- ~ Would you like a traditional funeral or a family-directed funeral at home?
- ~ How would you like to be remembered in your eulogy?
- ~ What about...Autopsy? Burial plot? Minister? Music?

Published by [Sacred Crossings](#), this 24-page document outlines your final wishes concerning the care of your body after death, your funeral arrangements and your request for final disposition.

The Death Care Directive allows you to appoint a family member or close friend to be your death care advocate or agent. He or she will be a person you trust to honor your final wishes and to guide family members and friends through the process of your funeral and final disposition.

This written plan allows you to list all of your personal, legal, financial and medical information. Your completed document outlines your wishes concerning religious or cultural traditions for after-death care; your choice of funeral home or family-directed home funeral services; your funeral/memorial service and your choice for the final disposition of your body.

You may follow our suggestions for reflection to help you write your Life Review which can also serve as an outline for your eulogy.

A page is included that provides the information required for your death certificate, and a witness signature page formally acknowledges your final wishes.

Relieve your loved ones of the responsibility for making these difficult decisions...

We recommended that you create a 'Death File' and place it somewhere in your home where your next-of-kin can find it easily should your death occur unexpectedly. The Death File should include:

- Last Will and Testament
- Advance Health Care Directive
- Financial documents concerning bank accounts, trusts, real estate, life insurance etc.
- This Advance Death Care Directive

~ TESTIMONIALS ~

"Our family sat down and filled out our Death Care Directives together. The simple format made it easy to talk about the end-of-life issues that most of us had kept putting off dealing with. We got to know each other better in the process and even had some laughs. It feels good to have my wishes clearly in writing, and I'm happy to have that from my other family members as well." ~ Dahra P., Portland

"I am a healthy 43-year-old but I want to take responsibility for my own funeral plans and personal death care wishes, so my family won't have to. The Death Care Directive is the perfect tool for this." ~ Thea P., Los Angeles

"I got a Death Care Directive booklet from Sacred Crossings for my father who is in failing health. After going through it with him, I was so impressed and pleased at how it covered things I never would have thought of, I got one for my step-mother and two more for myself and my husband! Kind of fun to fill out, and it gives us peace of mind to know we have all the information and personal wishes that I or any of my family might need when the time comes. What a gift!" ~ KJ, Portland, Oregon

"This is a great booklet! I didn't want to talk about these things but it was easy to write them down. I feel a sense of peace and relief now I've filled this out." ~ Helga, UK

<http://www.deathcaredirective.com/>; <http://sacredcrossings.com/>

Death Midwifery

Consider appointing a Death Midwife

Source: <http://sacredcrossings.com/services-provided/death-midwifery/>