

Thinking ahead is an essential part of palliative care

Your wishes around healthcare and treatment

It is important that your loved ones and medical team members are aware of your personal wishes when it comes to your healthcare choices. We encourage our patients to think ahead and make plans, by taking some time to consider the type of care you would like to receive in the event that you become unable to make or communicate decisions about your treatment. For more information about the types of questions you might wish to consider when thinking ahead, please click here:

<https://hospicefoundation.ie/i-need-help/i-want-to-think-ahead/>

You can prepare an Advance Healthcare Directive to give certainty about what is important to you from a healthcare perspective, as well as about where and how you might like to be cared for. You will find an Advance Healthcare Directive form as well as more guidance at this link:

<https://decisionsupportservice.ie/sites/default/files/2023-12/Advance%20Healthcare%20Directive%20INTERACTIVE%20FINAL.pdf>

Making plans and sharing them

As well as your healthcare plan, you may also wish to consider details for any funeral arrangements. For some people, letting loved ones know their wishes in advance can provide some peace of mind. If they don't already have one in place, some people think about making a will. More information on this is available by clicking here: <https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/death/before-a-death/making-a-will/>

Supporting children to cope

In an effort to protect their children, parents can sometimes delay communicating with them about life-limiting illness. By talking to children, they can feel more prepared and supported to cope with the impact of life-limiting illness.

We can help

OLH&CS Medical Social Workers have experience in supporting people with the social, emotional and/or practical aspects of palliative care. If you would like further support with these plans and conversations, please email our Principal Medical Social Worker, Louise Casey, at lcasey@olh.ie