

ACT by sharing your health care wishes with those closest to you

Discussing your choices

You will want to discuss your desire to complete an Advance Care Plan and to explain your wishes to the individuals who are most likely to be involved in decision making if you become too ill to speak for yourself.

An important component of Advance Care Plans which makes them different from Living Wills is that you name an individual who will speak for you and make decisions on your behalf if you cannot. This person is called a Proxy. (See Page 12 of My Voice Booklet)

As these discussions can involve complex and sensitive issues, they can take several sessions. Talking about these issues may not be easy; you may face resistance, even denial, because those closest to you may be uncomfortable talking about living at the end of life.

Remember always, that your nearest relative, family and/or proxy do want to respect your wishes even though the conversation may get emotional.

Asking those closest to you to make decisions on your behalf, if you cannot, can be difficult for them too, but discussing your choices with them will reassure them. This book aims to help your discussions with those closest to you by providing the words to say and questions to ask.

Start by explaining that you are planning ahead for the day that you might be seriously ill or injured, and/or dying, and unable to communicate what kind of medical care you want.

Tell your nearest relative or proxy that you want them to know what you have chosen so they will not have to guess what you want at a difficult time.