

Legal Concerns

In Your Community

What to Expect: Making Decisions and Plans

Personal Care

Do you want the medical professionals to do everything they can to keep you alive or to 'allow natural death' (same as DNR – Do Not Resuscitate)?

These and other choices can be stated in the Power of Attorney for Personal Care. To name someone to make medical decisions and decisions about your personal care if the need arises, you must give that person a Power of Attorney for Personal Care.

Property and Finances

Have you given your trusted family member the authority to manage your financial affairs such as your banking? This can be done through a legal document called a Power of Attorney for Property. You can give someone a Power of Attorney for Property to help you manage your finances for a long or short period of time.

If You Want to Write a Last Will and Testament

Wills are helpful for making your wishes clear and preventing misunderstandings over inheritance or child custody issues after you have passed.

Financial Concerns

For the patient

Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) for First Nations and Inuit people provides some coverage for medications, equipment costs, medical transport costs, and certain home care circumstances.

For the caregiver

There are a variety of financial resources available to caregivers, such as:

- Employment Insurance
- Caregiver & Survivor Benefits
- Caregiver Benefit through individual employers
- ODSP or CPP Survivor benefits
- Compassionate Leave
- Employer Life Insurance or Pensions

For more information about palliative care, talk to your health care provider (e.g. doctor, specialist, or nurse) or community health worker (e.g. home support worker).

Your health care provider or community health worker can also provide more resources with information and support, including information from Cancer Care Ontario and the Canadian Cancer Society.



Cancer Care Ontario

What to Expect

When someone is diagnosed with advanced cancer, they may need to decide on treatment options, such as whether to continue, change or end treatments. If treatment is no longer working, they may want to let a close family member or friend know their final wishes for details such as the funeral and burial.

What to Ask

- Will I be continuing the same treatment, or are there other treatment options, such as palliative radiation, chemotherapy or surgery? What do you recommend for me?
- What is the purpose of my treatment – to help with pain and symptoms or slow the spread of cancer?
- Will my pain and symptoms be manageable if I decide to stay at home?
- Are there any negative side effects of this treatment that I should know about?
- What would happen if I decided to stop treatments?
- How long can I expect to live at home before I will need home nursing care (hospital or hospice)?
- What should I know about my future care needs that can be planned for now?

Making Plans & Decisions

Step 1

Think about where you want to be, when you need to be cared for, and who you would want to care for you (hospital, hospice, home or other community care place).

Step 2

Talk to people you trust about your worries or concerns.

Step 3

Decide who will speak for you if you can no longer do so; this person is called a 'substitute decision-maker' or 'substitute attorney'.

Step 4

Make your choices clear to others. Your choices about personal, legal and financial concerns must be made when you are of sound mind. These choices can be stated in the three documents called Powers of Attorney (POA). These documents speak for you when you no longer can, are free of charge and do not require a lawyer.

Step 5

Give your substitute decision-maker the power to act on your behalf. Once you have made these choices, they should be documented and witnessed on the appropriate forms.

They can be accessed from: Ministry of the Attorney General <http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/pgt/poa.pdf>

Speak Up Advance Care Planning Workbook http://www.advancecareplanning.ca/media/47048/acpworkbook_form_en.pdf.

Step 6

Let your trusted family members know where your important papers and other valuable items are, such as your will, passwords or keys/ combinations to locked boxes. They should have photocopies of them in case of fire or loss.

When you want to ensure your wishes will be carried out, it is helpful to talk to the people you trust most.

Reading the booklet 'A Guide to Advance Care Planning' with a family member or community health worker, will provide you with many answers. It is available at: <http://www.seniors.gov.on.ca/en/advancedcare/docsAdvancedCare.Guide.pdf>.

If you would prefer to write your own will instead of going to a lawyer, there are many helpful resources online including the document 'Will you be ready?' found on the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website (www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca)

