Having a cancer diagnosis can make you feel very anxious about the future. One way that often helps people to regain some sense of control over their life is to make an advance care plan.

You might not feel like planning right now, but taking the time to read and consider this booklet will help you to start thinking about the future, which you can record when you feel ready.

An advance care plan helps you to think about and record your future care wishes. You do not have to complete it but it can be reassuring to know that, if you were unable to make decisions for yourself, those looking after you would know what you want.

It can also reduce stress and anxiety amongst those who are important to you, as they will know they are making the right decisions for you.

An advance care plan is included with this booklet and is available on our website www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk. It can be very useful to discuss it with your doctor or nurse specialist.

You can then share it with those who are important to you and other health professionals involved in your care.
It's important to remember:

- Your advance care plan does not have to be completed all at once.
- It will only be used if you are unable to make or communicate your wishes for yourself.
- The form is not legally binding but will be taken into account when making best interest decisions about your future care.

Think of what you would like the people looking after you to know. You might want to go into lots of detail, or very little, but it is useful to indicate anything that's important to you, no matter how trivial it may seem.

You might like to consider things like your pets, music, nature, company, dignity, home, etc.

Future wishes
Choice
Family
Plan

Love
Support
Priorities

Beliefs
Peace
Personal
Live
Empowerment

Dignity
Care

Loved ones
Peace of mind

Advance care planning is everyone's business
Is there somebody you would like to help make decisions on your behalf?

Think of who you would trust to do this and talk to them about it. It needn't be a heavy conversation and it might encourage them to plan for their future too.

If you wish, you may choose to give another person legal authority to make decisions on your behalf if you become unable to do so, by legally registering them as Lasting Power of Attorney for Health and Personal Welfare. This can be a relative, a friend or a solicitor.

A form for this can be obtained from the Office of the Public Guardian or some stationery shops that provide legal packs. www.publicguardian.gov.uk

Is there anything you would ideally like to avoid happening to you?

This could be anything you would hope to avoid, such as a particular medical treatment or care setting.

If you feel very strongly about not having specific treatments, please ask your nurse or doctor about making a formal Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (ADRT), which is legally binding under specific circumstances.
Do you have any further comments or wishes that you would like to share with others?

Please do not hesitate to add any further details that you would like those caring for you to know.

Every effort will be made to meet your wishes and care for you in the way you want.

Next steps

- Share this document and any advance care plan, lasting power of attorney, or ADRT with those who are important to you and the healthcare professionals looking after you.
- Keep your advance care plan with you and bring it with you for any hospital appointments.
- Make sure you read it from time to time and update it when necessary.

Plan for the future to enjoy the present.
Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact the Lead Nurse End of Life Care: York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE or telephone 01723 236254.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.
PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email pals@york.nhs.uk. An answer phone is available out of hours.

© 2018 York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. All Rights reserved.