



Advance Care Planning

Many people believe that advance care planning is something for “older” people. But Advance Care Planning is appropriate for adults in all stages of life, regardless of their health status. It is for those who want to make their health care wishes known **now**, in case they are ever in a position where they can’t speak for themselves.

Even if you are not dealing with an illness right now, it is important that you plan for your future healthcare to ensure you get the care you want. Discussions focused on your wishes, values, and beliefs will relieve healthcare professionals and loved ones from the burden of having to guess what you would want in illness or other circumstances.

What is Advance Care Planning?

Advance care planning is a proactive approach

to making decisions about the care you want to receive if you are unable to make those decisions yourself. It is most applicable to end-of-life care decisionmaking, since people may lose decisionmaking abilities as they approach the end of their lives.

Goals of Advance Care Planning

- ☑ Ensure your healthcare wishes are expressed and honored by using advance directives
- ☑ Provide loved ones with the critical information and the confidence needed for future decisions

How Do I Start Advance Care Planning?

Advance care planning is typically completed with a physician or another healthcare professional. However, advance care planning discussions also need to include family and loved ones. Doing this allows loved ones to have a better understanding of what *you* want.

The steps for completing the advance care planning process vary by state, and should be reviewed

with your doctor or healthcare provider when you’re ready to have these discussions. However, many of the steps are similar across states. These steps generally include (*over*):

- Identifying a healthcare agent
- Completing an advance directive

Why Advance Care Planning?

Decisions about end-of-life care are very personal and depend on your values and beliefs. It is impossible to predict every type of illness

or event. It's important to reflect on what is important to you.

Visit [_____](#) to access a Telligen toolkit of advance care planning resources for Colorado, Illinois and Iowa.

How do I start the conversation?

Whether you're talking about your own wishes or trying to find out the wishes of someone close to you, getting started on a care-planning conversation can be difficult. But if your family knows you want to talk, they may be more willing than you think. To bring up the topic of advance care planning; consider a few of the following examples.

Reflect on the experience of someone in your family.

"When Uncle John died, he made it so easy on his children. They all knew what kind of care he wanted and didn't want. Everyone seemed so peaceful in his last days."

Bring it up when you're attending a funeral or reading the obituaries.

"I wonder what the last weeks of life were like for these people. When it's my turn, I want..."

Talk in terms of someone else's needs.

"My doctor says I have to tell him who's going to make medical decisions for me if I can't make them myself."

"My lawyer needs to know what kind of end-of-life care I'm planning."

"I know you'll feel better if you really understand what I'd want."



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