



Palliative care and people with learning disabilities: Advance care planning (3)



What is advance care planning?

Advance care planning is a way to think about and discuss personal wishes for future care and the end of life. Planning ahead ensures that if a person is unable to make their own decisions, health care professionals understand what is important to them and reassurance that the right decisions will be made.

An advance care plan (ACP) is not a legally binding document and can be amended at any time. It includes how people would like to be cared for at the end of life and what health care professionals should know about them. Things to include:

- Where is the person's preferred place of care (PPC) and preferred place of death (PPD)?
- Who are the significant people in their lives and how should they be included in their future care? (Note that for some people with learning disabilities this may be a carer or support worker.)
- Does the person have capacity to make decisions and if so, is there an appointed person to make decisions on their behalf if they lacked capacity?
- Are there any spiritual or religious needs?
- What they would like to happen to their body after death?

An advance care plan should also cover the smaller things such as:

- Would they like music playing, a favourite radio station book being read or television programme?
- Do they have pets and would they like to see them?
- What is their usual routine?

Lasting Power of Attorney

A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) gives someone the legal rights to make decisions on behalf of another person if they lack capacity. There are two types of LPA; **Health and Welfare** (medical treatments and places of care) and **Property and Affairs** (money, property and managing finances).



Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (ADRT)

An Advance Decision allows the person to record specific medical treatments that they do not want to be given. An ADRT is legally binding and must be followed in the event that the person lacks capacity.

Top tips!

- Advance care planning is a process that occurs over a series of conversations.
- Document advance care planning conversations and ensure that this is accessible to everyone involved.
- Encourage conversations to include a family member, friend or significant person.
- A person with learning disabilities may require reasonable adjustments. Does the person require easy read, pictures or a different format? Think creatively- you can transfer the information into a written document for practitioners afterwards,
- It is never too early to start conversations. Plan ahead!

Useful websites

- www.pcpld.org
- www.goldstandardsframework.org.uk
- www.bild.org.uk
- www.sixsteps.net
- www.dsscotland.org.uk
- www.compassionindying.org.uk
- www.resus.org.uk/respect

For further information please visit: www.learningdisabilitynurse.co.uk