

The Role of the Support Person

Many of us will bring a family member or friend to a medical appointment. They will be able to hear and help us remember what was said. There may be someone we talk to about treatment options – someone to help us think through what we might choose to do.

In Victoria, it is also possible to formally appoint someone as your Support Person by completing a form. The **Support Person has no power to make decisions for you**. Their role is to help you make your own decisions. They can do this by:

- Attending appointments with you to hear what the doctor or other health practitioner tells you.
- Helping explain how you prefer to receive health information, e.g. drawings and not just words.
- Helping you to think through the pros and cons of what you have been told – but not telling you what to do.
- Helping access information. Your appointed Support Person can access the same information that you can access, e.g. your pathology results.

NOTE: If you lose the ability to make your own decisions, the Support Person does not step into the role of making decisions for you as the Medical Treatment Decision Maker – unless they are also your Medical Treatment Decision Maker. The Support Person can help your Medical Treatment Decision Maker know what is important to you.