

## Advance Care Directives

**“I have talked to my family about my future healthcare. I will write this down in an Advance Care Directive so they remember”**

The **Victorian Advance Care Directive form** comes from the legislation.

The [Advance Care Directive form](#) contains two parts:

1. **Values Directive:** This is information about your preferences and values and what gives your life meaning. It is largely intended to be used by the Medical Treatment Decision Maker (MTDM) at a time when all the details of your latest illness are known.
  - i. They should consent to treatment they believe you would consent to;
  - ii. They should refuse treatment that they believe you would refuse.
2. **Instructional Directive:** This is an instruction to your Health Practitioner giving in-advance consent to, or refusal of, specific treatments. The Health Practitioner, including doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, Chinese herbalists, chiropractors, ambulance paramedics, or any other health practitioners registered with the Health Practitioner Board, must follow a valid Instructional Directive if it applies to the current situation.

These Health Practitioners must also enquire if you have an Advance Care Directive or have appointed a Medical Treatment Decision Maker. The best time to enquire is when you are not seriously ill, which is why you will be asked about this, even if you are still able to make your own decisions.

A good reason to write an Advance Care Directive is to help your Medical Treatment Decision Maker and family remember what you have said would be important for you.

You should **particularly** consider writing an Advance Care Directive, rather than relying on verbal communication, if:

1. You have very strong preferences about future medical treatment.
2. You will have no MTDM, and there is no one suitable that you could appoint. The Advance Care Directive will be your voice if you cannot speak directly to your doctors and health care team.
3. You have preferences for your health care that are different from what you think your family would want for you.
4. You have difficulties with thinking or communication but may be able to make your own decisions if given information in the right way for you. You can write the best way for people to communicate with you in your Advance Care Directive and also identify your Support Person.

## Signing and Witnessing

Once completed, you need to sign your Advance Care Directive in the presence of two witnesses:

- i. A medical practitioner;  
  
and
- ii. One other adult witness (not your appointed Medical Treatment Decision Maker)

## Where to keep your documents

You should keep your original document in a safe place and give copies to your:

- Medical Treatment Decision Maker
- Close family
- Health practitioners – General Practitioners, Specialists, Nursing Service, etc
- Hospitals or Health Services that you attend.

- If you are likely to need an ambulance in the near future, keep a copy with your medications or on the fridge, and the paramedics will find it.
- You can also upload a copy to MyHealth Record.

Advance Care Directives should be reviewed and updated with a new document if your health or circumstances change, and the earlier document is no longer what you want.