

Top tips for having important Advance Care Planning conversations

People in Newham have told us the following things were helpful to them when planning ahead.

1. Start conversations about end of life wishes in a gentle way

- [Newham's Information leaflets](#) with basic facts can be given as a starting point.
- [Advance statement forms](#) are a gentle start to talking about what is important to someone at the end of life.

2. Make the options clear, for example:

- An advance statement is a form that lets you record the care you want in the future.
- An advance decision (living will) is a form which lets you refuse any medical treatments that you do not want to be given in the future.
- A lasting power of attorney is a legal document that lets you give someone you trust the power to make decisions for you.

3. Emphasise the benefits

- Planning can make things easier for family and loved ones.
- If you wait until it's too late, medical professionals may have to make important decisions without knowing what matters to you.
- Planning ahead is a good way of telling people about your faith and how this affects the care you want.
- Making an advance care plan is free and you do not need a solicitor.
- By having conversations early you can avoid stressful situations in future, including disagreements between family members.
- It opens up conversations about the practicalities of future care which means you can get plans in place now. For example if you would prefer to be cared for at home rather than in a care home.
- It gives people peace of mind knowing that when it matters people will know their wishes, so they can get on with living now.

4. Clarify the key points

- Planning ahead is for everyone, you do not have to be unwell or over a certain age. Advance care plans can be made by anyone over the age of 18 who has strong views about future care and treatment.
- You must have mental capacity to make an advance statement, advance decision or health power of attorney, which means you should not leave it until the last minute.
- It is important that once you have written down your wishes, the documents are shared with everyone involved in your care.
- Your family does not have any legal right to make decisions for you if you have not made them your Lasting Power of Attorney.
- You cannot appoint yourself as Lasting Power of Attorney for someone else, they must do this while they have capacity.

Contact Compassion in Dying's free nurse-led information line for support:

- 0800 999 2434 (Monday to Friday, 11am-3pm)
- info@compassionindying.org.uk

Advance care planning tools	Key points
Advance Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advance statement is a form that lets you record the care you want in the future. • Free at www.compassionindying.org.uk • Not legally binding but must be used to help make decisions about your care
Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advance decision (living will) is a form which lets you refuse any medical treatments that you do not want to be given in the future. • Free at www.compassionindying.org.uk • Legally binding
Lasting Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A health power of attorney is a legal document that lets you give someone you trust the power to make decisions for you. • £82 or free for with certain benefits • Available from the Office of the Public Guardian https://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney