



Let's Talk: Advance Care Planning

What is advance care planning?

Advance Care Planning is making sure the people who matter know what matters most to you. It includes thinking about, talking about, and writing down your wishes for future health care. It also includes important legal documents.

Why is advance care planning important?

It is your right to make decisions about your health care. If you are very sick, injured, or nearing the end of your life and you cannot communicate, someone will make decisions for you. Thinking about, talking about, and writing down your wishes for future health care makes sure your wishes are known and can be honored. If you don't plan, the decisions that are made may not be what you would have wanted and this can also be very difficult for your loved ones.

Who should plan for future care?

Everyone. If you are age 18 or older and live in Wisconsin, there is no person who can automatically make health care decisions for you if you cannot (such as your spouse or next of kin).

Others who should plan include people who have high risk jobs or who engage in high risk activities, people who are caregivers or health care professionals, people who live with chronic and/or serious illness, and people who are nearing the end of their life.

When should I plan?

Start planning now. Continue your conversations and update your legal documents as your life and health change. Starting when you are young and healthy will help you to be more prepared if you have a health crisis. You can also help your loved ones talk about and write down wishes for care.

How do I plan?

1. **Think** about what matters to you.
2. **Choose** your Health Care Agent(s).
3. **Complete** an Advance Directive and share it with loved ones, your health care professionals, and others you trust.
4. **Repeat** this process as your life and health change.

Fox Valley
Advance Care Planning
Partnership

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