

Somerset Planning ahead

Preparing for future health and care

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This booklet is designed to explain the different types of plans you can create to document your future wishes in relation to your health and care preferences. It guides you to services that can support you to make and record your decisions whilst you have the mental capacity to do so.

Planning your future health and care

If you were suddenly unwell, injured or dying do those important to you know your wishes? Planning ahead can help make sure that other people know what you want and make it more likely that your wishes will be understood and followed.

You can plan ahead at any time, not just when faced with a life limiting illness or a medical diagnosis. Putting plans in place earlier can help with sudden and unexpected circumstances. Plans can be updated as your situation or circumstances change.

Why should I plan ahead?

Planning ahead identifies what is important to you, your personal values, life goals, and preferences relating to medical care and care provision. It is also about who you are – what makes you 'you'. Lots of people find that it gives them reassurance to know that their priorities will be considered if they become unable to make decisions or communicate their wishes.

Getting these views documented can be helpful for family or friends and health or social care professionals who may need to support you in the future. It can help reassure close friends and family about how you would like to be cared for and avoid them worrying about making decisions on your behalf that you would not want. It can also help avoid any potential disagreements as your views will be known.

“My mum was 53 when she had meningitis and spent five days in ITU in Musgrove Park Hospital. As soon as she returned home she sorted out a Power of Attorney – it is never too early to think about it ”



SIDeR+ and how can it help me with planning ahead?

SIDeR+ stands for the Somerset Integrated Digital e-Record, a shared care record system, which gives an overview of your health and social care information in one digital record. This combined information is not stored anywhere and is read-only.

SIDeR+ ensures the right information is available to the right person, at the right time, enabling health and social care professionals in Somerset to see the most up-to-date information about you for your direct care. Some information including advance care plans can be viewed in the Patient NHS App (please speak to your GP about this access).

The advance statement of wishes, the Somerset Treatment Escalation Plan and the Advance Decision to Refuse treatment are all able to be saved on SIDeR+.

This means if you are unable to communicate your wishes the healthcare teams can check if you have any pre existing plans you have made with your wishes included. To find out more about SIDeR+ please scan the QR code or visit:

<https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/about-us/digital-projects/sider/>



**“I planned ahead not because
I am dying, but because I have a family.”**

What can I do to prepare?

Before you plan ahead it is a good idea to have a think about what you want people to know and what is important to you. The wishes you express are personal to you and can be about anything to do with your future care. Here are some examples...

- What makes me anxious?
- What brings me peace?
- What gives me strength?
- If I am unable to make my own decisions, what is the name of the person or people I wish to be consulted on my behalf?
- Where would I like to be looked after if it is not possible to be at home?
- Where would I like to be cared for and who would I like to be with at the end of my life?
- Have I made and shared my funeral arrangements?
- Please avoid: (e.g. have the TV on all the time)
- Please make sure: (e.g. my phone is near me)
- What resuscitation decisions have been made?

What gives me pleasure and meaning in my life?

I like

I dislike

.....
is important to me

Who will pay the bills?

What will happen to the person I care for if I become unwell?

Who will look after any pets I have should I need to go into hospital?

How do I want my spiritual, cultural, religious beliefs to be reflected in my care?

What are my care and treatment preferences?

What are the different plans?

The Somerset Treatment Escalation Plan (STEP/TEP)?

A Somerset Treatment Escalation Plan (STEP/ TEP) form is one type of advance care plan relating to your health. It is a document that records the outcomes of discussions had with your healthcare professional regarding:

- what treatments may be appropriate for you if you were to become seriously unwell
- whether admission to hospital would be beneficial for you and
- whether cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) would be right for you in the event that your heartbeat and breathing stopped.

The STEP form will be completed with you if you have certain health conditions, or your GP or healthcare professional recommends this. A STEP document is a guide for those caring for you to know what your wishes are relating to care and treatment if you become too unwell to express your views. The STEP is discussed with you and should be kept with your records.

If you are unwell and unable to be involved in the making of the decisions needed on the STEP form this may be completed in your best interests. This is why it is important to have and record advance care planning discussions before you become unwell.

This form is not legally binding; however health or care professionals should have valid reasons for not following the recommendation on the STEP form.

If CPR is not appropriate this will not prevent you from receiving other treatments for your comfort and dignity. These would still be offered to you as appropriate.

The STEP form is written and saved on SDeR+ and you should receive a printed copy.

The advance statement of wishes

This is a non-legally binding document that sets out your wishes about what you would like to happen if you are not able to communicate yourself. You can explore and record any wishes or preferences that you might have about what is important to you and your future care. An advance statement you can pull out and complete is attached below. You can send the completed form to us where we can upload to SDeR+. There health and social care professionals can view your wishes if you are unable to communicate in the future.

If you would prefer to type this form you can access this by scanning the QR code or visiting somerset.eolcare.uk and search: **Somerset advance statement.**



The completed advance statement is shared only with your consent and only with those who need it. This could be your GP, hospital teams if you are admitted or care teams if you ever need them.

Advance statement of my wishes – Fill in with a ball point pen

Full name:		Address:
Date of birth: /.....	Telephone number:	

This advance statement of wishes document is a written statement that sets down your preferences, wishes, beliefs and values regarding your potential future care. It is meant to enable and empower you to have a voice about your future.

It is designed to be shared with anyone involved in your care and will give those around you (your family, friends and health or social care team) a clear idea of what you would want if you cannot tell them. In Somerset you can request this document is saved to the electronic shared care record SIDeR+.

Your advance statement is not legally binding. This means that a health or social care professional does not have to follow the instructions that are in it. However, what you write in your advance statement is still important. It must be taken into account when someone is making a decision for you in your best interests if you have lost the ability to make or communicate decisions. It can be used if you later become unwell or need medical treatment or care.

The following sections offer suggestions for you to think about; you do not need to fill in every section.

Once complete either return to us at: FAO: Advance Statement, Palliative Care Office, Musgrove Park Hospital, Parkfield Drive, Taunton, TA1 5DA or email an attachment to: advancecareplanning@somersetft.nhs.uk

About my social history

For example, tell us about your background, where are you from and your career history.

Important to me and who I am. The things that are important in my life are:

For example, what do you enjoy doing? Spending time with family or friends, what music you enjoy or books / authors you like reading. What are your hobbies and interests? Where do you like doing these things and how often and who with? Do you have any pets or animals to care for? Who would look after your pets if you are unwell?

What would make you feel peaceful and comfortable in your care?

What do you like or dislike? Certain activities, or music? Are you scared of anything, such as animals, needles, noises, bright lights or being left alone for too long? Any sensory considerations? Any religious considerations?

My care - Important information to know when caring for me:

For example, do you have a daily routine you like to stick to? Such as what time you get up and go to bed or if you prefer a bath or shower? What are your preferences for care? What can you do independently at present? What would you like help with? If care was needed at any stage, do you have a preference of male or female carers?

The things that are important to my identity are:

For example, what do you like to be called, what clothes do you like to wear, do you have any faith, beliefs or cultural traditions? Are you a member of any community groups? How important is your independence, privacy and dignity?

Important people in my life are:

I am happy for the following people to be involved in discussions about my care:

Name:	Relationship:	Phone number / address:

People who I **don't want** involved in discussions about my care:

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People who have Lasting Power of Attorney for my health and welfare decisions:

Name:	Relationship:	Phone number / address:

People who have Lasting Power of Attorney for my finances and property decisions:

Name:	Relationship:	Phone number / address:

My food needs and preferences are:

For example, what should people know about your eating habits, are you vegetarian or vegan? Do you have any allergies? Are you restricted from eating any foods by your religion/ faith? Food likes and dislikes.

The place I would like to be cared for at end of life is:

Although we are unable to promise that the place you would like to be cared for at the end of life can be granted, stating your wishes means it's more likely to happen.

Would you prefer to be cared for in a hospice, a particular hospital or in your own home and who would you like to be with you? Is there a particular piece of music you would like played, special items around you or would you prefer peace and quiet?

Additional things to consider:**Have you made a will?**

Have you informed your next of kin where your will is stored?

Will is stored here:

Have you planned for your funeral or documented your funeral preferences?

Have you informed your next of kin who your funeral plan is with?

My funeral plan is with:

Have you registered your organ donation preferences and spoken with your family about your wishes?**Have you made an advance decision to refuse treatment (ADRT / Living will)?**

If yes please ensure copies are provided to your GP, anyone with Lasting Power Of Attorney and request this is saved on SDeR+

Have you got a plan for who will care for your pets if you are not able to?

My pets will go / be cared for by (include contact details)...

Have you made a plan for your digital assets?

I give my consent for this document to be shared on the Somerset SDeR+ and the NHS apps (Please sign here)

Date: /..... /.....

How do I appoint someone to make decisions for me in the future?

You may wish to legally appoint someone, or more than one person, to make decisions on your behalf if you are no longer able to do so; this is called a lasting power of attorney (LPA). This person or persons may be a close family member, a friend, or any other person you choose. They would become your attorney(s). This gives you more control over what happens to you if you have an accident or an illness and cannot make your own decisions. There are two types of lasting power of attorney (LPA).

LPA for property and financial affairs

This attorney will have the power to make decisions about money and property for you, for example:

- managing a bank or building society account or paying bills

It can be used as soon as it's registered, with your permission.

LPA for health and welfare

This attorney will have the power to make decisions about things like:

- your daily routine, for example washing, dressing, eating or your medical or social care

It can only be used when you are unable to make your own decisions.

You can apply online, print the forms from www.gov.uk and search for 'Power of Attorney' or have the forms sent to you by telephoning the OPG contact number. They are currently £92* each to complete if you do them yourself or with help from a friend or family member (*as of November 2025). You can also find information about whether you are entitled to apply for an exemption or reduction to help with the fees.

You may wish to consult a solicitor to help you complete an application, although this will likely cost you more.

The application must be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian in order for it to be valid.

Office of the Public Guardian
Helpline 0300 456 0300

Lasting power of attorney for property and financial affairs
Section 1
The donor

You are appointing other people to make decisions on your behalf. You are 'the donor'.

Restrictions - you must be at least 18 years old and be able to understand and make decisions for yourself (called 'mental capacity').

If you are filling this in for a friend or relative and they can no longer make decisions independently, they can't make an LPA. See the Guide 'Before you start' for more information.

Title First names
Last name
Any other names you've known by (optional)
Date of birth
Day Month Year
Address
Postcode
Email address (optional)

For OPG
LPA registration date
Day Month Year
OPG reference number
Only valid with the official stamp here

LPA Property and Financial Affairs (2012)

Contact the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) if you need help:

customerservices@publicguardian.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 456 0300

Relay UK (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): 18001 then 0300 123 1300

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,
Friday, 9am to 5pm.
Wednesday, 10am to 5pm

Office of the Public Guardian
PO Box 16185
Birmingham
B2 2WH



Scan here to visit the
gov.uk website

What is an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (ADRT)?

If you feel strongly that there are some medical treatments you would not want to receive in the future, you can formalise your wishes in an advance decision to refuse treatment (ADRT), which is sometimes known as a 'living will' or advance directive.

If you lose the mental capacity or ability to communicate your decisions in the future, your ADRT will inform your healthcare team about the treatments you want to refuse. If you are still able to make decisions about medical treatments your ADRT will not apply.

You should make an advance decision to refuse treatment if there are situations you want to avoid or treatment that you do not want. If it meets certain criteria and is valid it is legally binding. This means doctors and healthcare professionals should follow it.

If you complete an ADRT please ensure this is discussed and copies are shared with your family, GP and healthcare professionals and anyone who you have nominated Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare decisions. A copy can be uploaded to SiDeR+ by your GP or healthcare professional. You can find copies of an ADRT to print or complete online, such as on the Compassion in Dying website:

www.compassionindying.org.uk. If you need help to complete the form you can telephone 0800 999 2434 or email info@compassionindying.org.uk.

You do not need a solicitor to make an advance decision to refuse treatment.

Scan to visit the
Compassion in
Dying website



Scan to find out more
about the Somerset
Treatment Escalation Plan



What other ways can I plan ahead?

Write a will

A will lets you decide what happens to your money, property, and possessions after your death.

You can write your will yourself but should get advice from a professional if it is not straightforward. For a will to be legally valid it needs to be formally witnessed and signed.

Some wills can be done via a solicitor with a donation or legacy given to a charity- check out your nominated charity for more details.

Make funeral arrangements

Share your wishes in writing with those close to you. Consider approaching a funeral director for advice about your funeral. You can have a unique funeral without the need to spend large sums of money. It is worth considering how the funeral might be paid for and what options are available to you.

Consider making a funeral plan towards the cost. You may like to seek advice from a funeral director beforehand as not all plans are the same. You could document your preferences about the music you would like to be played, readings or prayers you would want and who you would like to read them. This can help friends and family at a difficult time.

Organ, tissue and cornea donation

You can ensure your wishes are known about donating your organs and tissue after your death. Strict criteria applies and your faith and beliefs will always be respected. You can opt out by recording your decision on the Organ Donation register. You need to ensure your family knows your views as they can override your decision if they don't know what you want. For more information scan here, or visit www.organdonation.nhs.uk or call 0300 123 23 23.



Write your legacy

Provide the story of your life any way you want. This could be by making a memory box, writing a family cookbook, putting together a photo album, writing letters, recording a video or audio message. Be unique and creative!

Protect your digital legacy

Any information you have that is digital; social media accounts, online accounts, photos, videos, gaming profiles, cryptocurrency, purchased media and music, your own website or blog are your digital assets.

When you die these become a digital legacy. Think about taking an inventory of your digital assets and devices, with instructions of what you would like to happen to them after you die. Ensure that your passwords are stored securely and the person managing your digital legacy, your "digital executor" can locate your log-in details.

You can find out more under 'For the public' on the Digital Legacy website: <https://digitallegacyassociation.org/>



To find out more about planning ahead
please visit the 'member of public' section
on the Somerset end of life care and
bereavement support website

somerset.eolcare.uk

Contact details

If you need help about the contents of this booklet,
contact us on 01823 343100.
EOLCEducation@somersetft.nhs.uk

St Margarets Hospice Care

For more information about St Margaret's Hospice Care you can access:

www.st-margarets-hospice.org.uk
01823 333822 or 01935 709480



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