

Guidance for health care professionals and support workers in starting and having conversations about planning ahead with people with cognitive impairment

Wording on the leaflet	This guidance accompanies the use of the easy read 'Introducing Planning Ahead' leaflet
'Making plans helps you to think about your health, your wishes and your care'	<p>Many healthcare professionals and support workers are concerned about introducing conversations about the future. However people are often grateful for an opportunity to talk about these things- often focusing on '<i>what matters most</i>' to them can be a helpful start. We know that often people find it easier to discuss these things earlier, when they remain well. It can be seen as a life plan; something to think and talked about, then put aside and to get on with living.</p> <p>Our role is often to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise when a conversation might be helpful or required • pick up a cue that facilitates a conversation • being aware of what is included in planning ahead • ask open questions • be prepared to listen <p>Sometimes conversations are unplanned they arise when we might least expect them.</p> <p>These conversations are best held when the person is accompanied by family, friend or advocate</p>
'It is ok for you to talk about your wishes at any time before you might be unwell and need care. You could talk to your doctor or nurse'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We like to offer people an opportunity to discuss what is important to them and their family/carers and to think about their wishes for the future • This is often easier to manage when people are relatively well • We know that people who have been able to make decisions in advance are more likely to have their wishes met
'It is good to make decisions or ask questions about the future. Your wishes are important'	<p>Opportunities and prompts for conversations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new diagnosis • A change in condition • A move to a care facility • A recent experience of bereavement or knowing someone who is facing a life limiting condition • A recent experience of hospital or other medical care • When a person requests this or their family do • Prompted by something in a television programme or something they have witnessed or heard • As a matter of routine or age related
'Everyone has choices and you can change your mind about any decisions'	<p>Planning ahead is not mandatory, or a tick box exercise, not a one off conversation but a series of conversations over time. Some people will limit the conversation by leaving an open- door approach allows us to offer to discuss at a later date. It may be that their family, carer or advocate has questions or concerns</p>

<p>'Nurses, doctors and social workers like to know if you have thought about your wishes if you became seriously ill'</p>	<p>It is an important part of planning ahead to ask if this has ever been considered</p>
<p>Here are a few examples of decisions and choices that some people like to make:</p>	
<p>'About their health and your body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions about your health and any worries that you have. • How your health might change in the future. • You also might ask about care towards the end of your life. 	<p>If more medical questions are raised it would be helpful to find someone who can answer these questions, such as a nurse or doctor</p>
<p>About their care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where you want to be looked after • Who is there to help you • Any wishes you might have if you became seriously ill 	<p>Often these questions cannot be answered in one go, it may be that we are introducing the sort of decisions people do and can make over time. Conversations can be ongoing as a person's condition changes. However, some people might be very clear about their wishes early on and want to make these decisions known.</p> <p>If people do want to make decisions it is advisable that they speak to their GP who will ensure it is put in their medical notes</p>
<p>Personal wishes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important things • How you like things to be done • Things you like to have with you 	<p>There may be things that the person may wish to do before the time comes that they may not be able to do them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals • Plans • People to see • Places to go
<p>It is helpful to write things down and tell someone important of their wishes.</p>	<p>If the person themselves do not wish to discuss it may be that their family/carer or advocate could ask questions on their behalf.</p>