



February 2019

Plan for the future

Decisions about your medical treatment



If you can't make a medical treatment decision because you are very sick, the law says who can make this decision for you. For example, you may be unconscious or very confused because of your illness.

If you can't make a medical treatment decision your doctor will ask, in this order, your:

1. husband, wife, or partner
2. carer (the person who looks after you), but this can't be someone who is paid to do this as a job
3. adult child (oldest first)
4. parent
5. sister or brother (oldest first).

You might want someone different to be the person who makes medical treatment decisions for you.

For example, a friend, or your youngest adult child.



To choose someone different you:

- fill out a special form
- follow the instructions in the form about how you sign it.

If you follow these steps correctly, you have made a legal document.

How should the person make decisions for you?

The person who makes decisions for you must make the decision they think you would want. To help them, you should talk to them about what is important to you.

You can also fill out another form where you can write down what is important to you in your life. This is called an 'advance care directive'.

In this form you can also make decisions now for the future. For example, if you have a serious illness you may already know what medical treatment you want or don't want in the future.

What happens if you don't have any family?

If you don't have any family, then Victoria's Public Advocate might be asked to make the medical treatment decision for you if you can't.

The Public Advocate will try to make the decision you would want.

Where to find the forms

Find the forms you need in the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) booklet called 'Take Control' and on the OPA website.

www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au

The forms are free.



To choose who can make medical treatment decisions for you if you can't, fill in the:

- 'Appointment of medical treatment decision maker' form.

To write down what is important to you in your life or to make medical decisions now for the future, fill in the:

- 'Advance care directive' form.

The law says you can only complete these forms if you understand what you are doing.



No one should force you to do this.

It is your choice.



If you have any questions

You, or your relative or friend, can call OPA for advice on 1300 309 337.



You can ask for a telephone interpreter.