

Advance Care Planning (ACP)

Frequently Asked Questions



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What is Advance Care Planning (ACP)?

Advance Care Planning (ACP) is the process of planning for your current and future healthcare. ACP helps you to communicate to your loved ones and healthcare team about your values and how these values shape your healthcare preferences.

In the event you are unable to make decisions or speak for yourself, your ACP guides your loved ones and healthcare team to make decisions in your best interest.



Why is ACP Important?

Sometimes, we may encounter a medical crisis which impairs our own capacity to make decisions. In such cases, we may need our loved ones to participate in decisions related to our health and personal care.

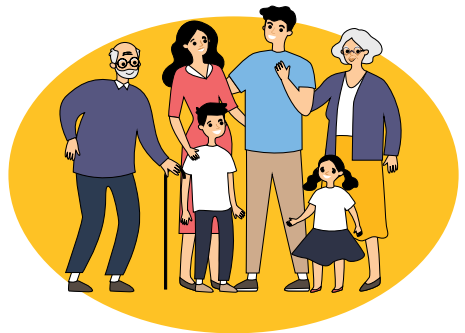
Should this happen, ACP helps you to communicate your values and healthcare preferences to your loved ones, and your care team.

ACP helps to avoid guilt, stress and conflicts among your loved ones, as your choices guide them towards making important care decisions for you.

Who needs ACP?

ACP is an important part of routine healthcare. Anyone can start their ACP today regardless of age and health condition. Discussing and documenting your healthcare preferences with your loved ones and doctors can give everyone a peace of mind.

ACP is particularly important for people who have chronic illnesses, early cognitive impairment, frail, or are approaching the end of life.



When should I start ACP?

Life is unpredictable, and you will never know when you might need your ACP. ACP is a way to plan ahead with your loved ones and doctors. We recommend that everyone, regardless of health status, starts planning for your ACP today.



Visit www.aic.sg/care-services/simple-steps-for-ACP for more information.

How do I start ACP?

You can begin with three simple steps:



Step 1 – Reflecting on what you want

Think about what is important and meaningful to you, the quality of life you want, and the medical treatment you are comfortable with



Step 2 – Choose your nominated healthcare spokesperson

Think about the people in your life you trust to convey your care preferences should you no longer be able to do so



Step 3 – Record your choices

Make an appointment with an ACP facilitator to record your preferences on your Advance Care Plan



Visit www.aic.sg/care-services/simple-steps-for-ACP for more details on how to start your ACP journey.

Where can I get my ACP done?

ACP may be done at government hospitals, polyclinics and social care providers.



Scan QR code to find an ACP provider.

Who can I appoint as my voice or “Nominated Healthcare Spokesperson (NHS)”?

ACP is a conversation with the person or people who will represent you if you cannot speak for yourself. Your Nominated Healthcare Spokesperson (NHS) speaks for you when you do not have capacity to decide for yourself or to communicate your wishes.

Your NHS would ideally be someone who:



Is at least
21 years old



Knows you well
For example, a family member or a close friend.



Is willing to speak up
for your goals and values
on your behalf



Can be trusted to act in your
best interest and tell your
doctors about the care you
wish to receive when u lose
mental capacity



Can handle stressful
situations well

You may nominate up to two NHS. Both NHS should be clear and in agreement about what your preferences are.

What are the differences between Advance Care Planning (ACP), Advance Medical Directive (AMD) and Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)?

	Advance Care Planning (ACP)	Advance Medical Directive (AMD)	Power of Attorney (LPA)
Purpose	<p>The ACP helps you to discuss and document matters related to your healthcare.</p> <p>It is a broad plan that may include extent of treatment, pain control options, and what to do should your heart suddenly stop.</p>	<p>Under Singapore’s law, only the individual can undertake decisions about refusing life-sustaining treatment.</p> <p>The AMD helps you to make an instruction beforehand to refuse life-sustaining treatment if you were terminally ill. In other words, you would not want life-sustaining treatment to prolong the dying process. In such case, the AMD helps you to avoid unnecessary prolonging the inevitable dying process.</p>	<p>Should you lose mental capacity, your family is not automatically granted legal powers over your finances and property.</p> <p>The LPA allows you to appoint a legal donee to look after your financial and/or personal welfare decisions on your behalf. Such matters may include: where you should live, who you should live with, daily lifestyle, and healthcare decisions.</p>
Involvement of loved ones	Yes, you may appoint up to 2 Nominated Healthcare Spokesperson(s).	None	Yes, you may appoint up to 2 Donee(s).
When is it used	<p>Your ACP is only used if you lose mental capacity (for example, you are in a coma or your illness has made it hard for you to communicate or make decisions). You would still be consulted as long as you are assessed to still have ability to make or communicate your decisions.</p> <p>Your loved ones and your medical team can use it to guide your care and advocate for your wishes.</p>	Your doctor(s) will check for your AMD when: (1) you lack mental capacity; (2) are terminally ill; (3) and require extraordinary life-sustaining treatment.	Your donee(s) will act on your behalf only when you lose mental capacity.



There is also a LPA-ACP bundled online tool at www.mylegacy.gov.sg to help you take the first steps towards completing your LPA and ACP.

If I have done my Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) or Advance Medical Directive (AMD), do I need to do Advance Care Planning (ACP)?

A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) grants your donee legal rights to make decisions for you. But it does not tell your donee what to do for your personal welfare in the event they need to act on your behalf.

An ACP helps you to communicate to your loved one, who may also be your donee, about what to do about your personal welfare. Examples of personal welfare matters include: where you should live, who you should live with, daily lifestyle, and healthcare decisions.

In order to reduce conflicting decisions among family members, we encourage you to nominate the same person as the donee and nominated healthcare spokesperson (NHS) for both your LPA and ACP.

An Advance Medical Directive (AMD) only covers your preferences for life-sustaining treatment should you lose your mental capacity.



However, there are many other aspects that are important for your loved ones and healthcare team to know too. Examples of important healthcare decisions include: pain management options where you would like to be cared for, and where you would like to spend your last days.

When will my doctors act on the wishes in my ACP?



The objective of an ACP is to help you have a say in your healthcare if you no longer have mental capacity. As long as you have mental capacity, you will be consulted on your preferences.

Can I change my mind after an ACP discussion?

Your Advance Care Plan is a reflection of your personal perspectives and preferences towards life. As your life changes, so may your life goals and decisions. You may continue to make changes to your ACP as long as you are assessed to have mental capacity. Your most updated ACP will replace the previous version(s). Read over your ACP every few years to make sure that it is still current.



In addition, it is a good idea to review your ACP after the following events:

- Every new decade of their life
- After a significant medical diagnosis
- After a significant change in their daily functioning (activities of daily living)

You are also encouraged to share any changes with your loved ones, NHS and the healthcare team whenever an updated version is documented so that they will be up-to-date with your new ACP.

Contact your ACP service provider to update your Advance Care Plan.

Does doing my ACP mean that my doctors will not treat me?

No, your doctors are bounded by medical ethics and the law to make sure that your best interests are protected.

Doing your ACP gives you a chance to make plans ahead, and helps the doctors to treat you in your best interests.

Do I need a lawyer to do ACP?

No, you do not need a lawyer to do your ACP.

How much is ACP?

AIC has worked with a few ACP providers to provide ACP at no cost, but there are some providers who may charge a nominal fee for doing an ACP. Please kindly check in with the individual provider on the cost.



Scan QR code to find an ACP provider.

Can I be an ACP facilitator?

ACP facilitators are professionals employed by healthcare or social care organisations.

All ACP facilitators are certified by AIC. Please contact acp@aic.sg if you are a professional who is interested in becoming an ACP facilitator.

The Heart of Care



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www.aic.sg



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AIC Link

The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) aims to create a vibrant care community for people to live well and age gracefully. AIC coordinates and supports efforts in integrating care to achieve the best care outcomes for our clients.

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We support stakeholders in their efforts to raise the quality of care, and also work with health and social care partners to provide services for the ageing population. Our work in the community brings care services and information closer to those in need.