

Planning ahead

Being told an illness cannot receive curative treatment can be an emotional and distressing experience for anyone to deal with and it is important to know that there are choices available to ensure a good quality of life and that family and friends are supported during this difficult time.

There are a number of ways to plan for your future care and for after your death and you don't have to be facing the end of life to put some of these in place. Planning and dealing with financial, practical and legal matters will benefit you and your loved ones, and those involved in your care can then do their best to follow these wishes and choices.

Financial help

Becoming unwell can have a negative effect on finances and income. If you need support because of your illness, you may qualify for disability benefits such as Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Attendance Allowance.

For more information on organisations that can help visit:

 [Age UK website](#)
[GOV.UK website for benefits calculator](#)

If you are struggling financially you may be able to apply for a charitable grant. For more information visit:

 [Turn2us website](#)

Funeral planning

Funerals have great significance in our society and are an important way to remember and celebrate the lives of people that have died. They are also important rituals that can affect the bereavement process that we go through. If you are able to plan your funeral think about letting your loved ones know what you would like, particularly whether you would like to be cremated or buried, together with other details about the type of service.

Many people are looking to pre-pay for their funerals as costs have risen so much. For factsheets and information to help visit:

 [Dying Matters website](#)
[Age UK website](#)

Any planning you are able to do can help to ease some of the worries of the bereaved, as this is such a stressful and busy time for them. It is also comforting for them to know that you will have the 'send-off' you wanted.

Making a will

A will sets out your instructions for dealing with your money, property and possessions following death. It is possible to draw up your own will however this is not advisable if your circumstances are not straightforward. Without a will a person's estate is intestate and the law decides who the beneficiaries will be.

For more information on wills and estate planning visit:

 [GOV.UK website](#)
[Age UK website](#)

Lasting Power of Attorney

A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) is a legal document that enables you (the 'donor') to appoint one or more people that you trust (known as 'attorneys') to make decisions on your behalf should you be unable to do so in the future.

There are two types of LPA, one for property & financial affairs and the other for health & welfare decisions about your care and treatment.

LPAs can be applied through a solicitor or online via:

 [GOV.UK website](#)


Advance care planning

Advance Care Planning is the discussion process between you and the health or social care professional who is co-ordinating your care. It is intended to help you plan your future care, make choices and give you the opportunity to think, talk about and write down preferences and priorities for your care at the end of life.

Your wishes can be recorded in an advance statement and can include important details like your preferred place of death. This can then be shared with the people important to you and your care providers who will do their best to uphold your wishes.

An advance decision is also known as a living will or ADRT (Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment). This is a legally binding document and enables you to refuse certain life-prolonging treatments should you become too unwell to be consulted.

For more information view:

 [Planning for your future care guide](#) published by NHS Improving Quality
[Compassion in Dying website](#) for documents






Digital legacy

Online interactions and social media have become more ingrained in our everyday lives. People who die often leave a digital legacy of photos, emails etc. which are then vulnerable to exploitation.

Organisations are beginning to look at ways to address this. For more information on how to manage digital legacy visit:

 [DeadSocial website](#)
[Saga 'Guide to preserving your digital legacy'](#)
[The Digital Legacy Association](#)

Other end of life, death and dying factsheets which may be of interest

Factsheet 1: About end of life care		Factsheet 4: Care in the final days	
Factsheet 2: Planning ahead		Factsheet 5: After death	
Factsheet 3: Supportive care for end of life		Factsheet 6: Bereavement support	