

ADVANCE DECISION TO REFUSE TREATMENT

An advance decision, sometimes known as an advance decision to refuse treatment, an ADRT, or a living will, is a decision you can make now to refuse a specific type of treatment at some time in the future.

It lets your family, carers and health professionals know your wishes about refusing treatment if you're unable to make or communicate those decisions yourself.

The treatments you're deciding to refuse must all be named within the advance decision or living will. You may wish to refuse a treatment in some situations, but not others. If this is the case, you need to be clear about all the circumstances in which you want to refuse this treatment. An advance decision is not the same as an advance statement and can be created simply at home or via a template form as mentioned further down.

Life-sustaining treatment

You can refuse a treatment that could potentially keep you alive, known as life-sustaining treatment including feeding and hydration when receiving care. Life-sustaining treatments are also those that replace or support ailing bodily functions, such as:

- Ventilation – this may be used if you cannot breathe by yourself
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) – this may be used if your heart stops
- Antibiotics – this can help your body fight infection
- Clinically assisted nutrition and hydration (CANH) - for those receiving supported nutrition and hydration to stay alive.

You may want to discuss this with a doctor or nurse who knows about your medical history before you make up your mind

You do not need to use a solicitor, a national charity, Compassion in Dying can help you make one for free. Online templates are available and will guide you through some questions to help you complete it. If you would like some help along the way, Compassion in Dying will be able to help.

MORE INFORMATION AND USEFUL WEB LINKS

www.compassionindying.org.uk or telephone: 0800 999 2434

www.nhs.uk/conditions/end-of-life-care/advance-decision-to-refuse-treatment/

<https://www.bma.org.uk/media/1161/bma-clinically-assisted-nutrition-hydration-can-h-full-guidance.pdf>