

What Matters to Me: Conversation Guide



MY END OF LIFE **CARE**

Talking about what matters to me

Talking to loved ones about Your End-Of-Life Care

1

Getting started

Talking about end-of-life care is different for everyone—some people find it overwhelming and confronting, others may be more accepting. Be prepared to give it some time and, if necessary, have a number of conversations to make your wishes fully known and understood.

- Try and find a quiet space where you can speak openly and calmly.
- Think about who you would like in the room. Is it your spouse or partner? Your child, sibling, or good friend?
- Remember that you can share as much or as little information as you would like.

How do I start this conversation?



Why are we talking about this?

2

Talking about 'why'

Your loved ones may be wondering why you want to talk about end-of-life care.

They may not know much about Palliative Care or Advance Care Planning.

- You could try explaining to them that, if you were to become unexpectedly sick, you don't want them to have to make stressful decisions on your behalf.
- Remind them that this information will help them in a time of stress when emotions can run high.
- Gently communicate that it's important that your end-of-life care happens the way you want it to.



Talking to loved ones about Your End-Of-Life Care

3

I want to speak to you about my end-of-life care...



Conversation starters

Sometimes, the hardest part about difficult conversations can be knowing where to start. You could try some of the below openers to help you get started.

- "I know it might be hard to talk about, but it's really important to me."
- "We've talked a bit about what happens after I pass away, but we haven't spoken about my end-of-life care."
- "I've been speaking to my doctor, and they have asked me to think about a few things..."

4

Talking about your 'wishes'

An important part of this conversation is communicating your wishes clearly. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers—end-of-life care is very personal. If you haven't considered your end-of-life care before, the Palliative Care Australia website has useful resources that may help you. (www.palliativecare.org.au)

- "If I was no longer able to make decisions about my treatment or care, I would like this person to be my substitute decision-maker..."
- "When the end of my life approaches, I would like to be cared for at this location..."
- "This is the type of health care I would like to receive..."

These are the things that are important to me...



Talking to loved ones about Your End-Of-Life Care

5

Next steps

It is a good idea to end the conversation with some next steps. If you haven't already, you could start to formalise your wishes in the form of an Advance Care Plan (also known as an Advance Health Directive in some states).

This may involve making an appointment with a health professional including your GP.



Visit www.health.gov.au/palliativecare

MY ^{END OF LIFE} CARE

Talking about what matters to me



Australian Government

Department of Health

