



Guidelines for People wishing to make an Advance Directive for Mental Health

An advance directive is a way of making your views known before a crisis when you may be unable to make informed choices. It will enable your views regarding your mental health care when you are mentally capable to be taken into account should you become mentally incapable of giving consent or making informed choices in the future. Doctors and other workers must take your wishes into account.

You cannot insist on receiving certain treatments, but can express your opinion about treatment you do not wish to have. If you are detained under the Mental Health Act 1983, and on Sections 2, 3, 36, 37, 47 or 48, there may be circumstances when you may be given treatment without your consent, and that you would prefer not to have, but your views are important to us.

An advance directive is very important and personal. You do not have to talk to a doctor or those close to you, but it may be valuable in case a dispute arises later about the content of your advance directive.

If you change your mind about any of the contents of your advance directive you are free to do so; any written document can be changed at any time, either verbally or in writing. It could be reviewed as part of your care programme. It is wise to ensure that old copies are destroyed and those close to you know your views have changed.

When you have completed the advance directive, date and sign it in the presence of an independent witness. The witness does not need to know the content, but should watch you sign.

The independent witness should be:

- ✿ Over 18 years of age
- ✿ Not a husband, wife, partner, relative or advocate



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When your advance directive is completed it should be copied to as many of the following as you wish:

- ✿ Your Home Manager
- ✿ Your own General Practitioner or doctor involved in your care
- ✿ A friend, relative or advocate
- ✿ Keep a copy for yourself
- ✿ Other workers in Health or Social Services

If you have any questions regarding this advance directive you can contact the following for advice:

- ✿ Home Manager
- ✿ Care co-ordinator
- ✿ General Practitioner
- ✿ Citizens Advice Bureau
- ✿ Advocacy Service

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