My Thinking Ahead and Making Plans
Helping you to take control and make your wishes heard

This Plan belongs to:

What is a Thinking Ahead Plan?
To be able to give the best care to people with a serious illness we need to talk about what is important to each person and their family, now and in the future.

This ‘Thinking Ahead Plan’ can help you to think about what things are important to you so you can talk about them with your family and the people who are looking after you. It is a plan that some people like to use to write down important information about their plans and wishes for the future. It helps other people know what your wishes are.
What goes in the plan?
You can use the plan in any way you like. You can put in information about the kind of care and treatment you want to have and where you would like to be cared for in the future as well as the things in your life that are important to you.

What doesn’t need to go in the plan?
The plan is not a medical or legal document so you don’t need to put medical or legal information in it unless you want to.

Why should I have one?
Some people use the plan to help them talk about things with their family or professionals like their doctor or nurse. You can use it to help you decide things about your care.

It is your choice, you do not need to have one.

When should I start one?
Many people like to start thinking about issues to do with their care a long time in advance while they are feeling well. Other people want to wait till later.

When should I add to it?
You should add to your plan whenever you want to and certainly think about adding to it whenever you see anyone involved with your care.
Filling in your plan

How do I fill it in?
We have put boxes in to give you a few ideas about what you might want to think about. Some people use all the boxes, some just use one or two. You might even want to add a box or page of your own. You can fill in as much or as little information as you want, it is entirely up to you. You can also fill in your plan bit by bit and change it whenever you want.

Who can help me fill it in?
Anyone you want! You can fill it in by yourself, with help from family or friends or with help from your nurses or doctors. If someone does help you, you might want to write their name in at the end.

Tell your GP to note on your record that you have a My Thinking Ahead and Making Plans booklet.

Filling in the boxes
If you want to use the boxes here are some suggestions.....

“Important things to me just now”
We would suggest that whenever you fill in any bit of your ‘Thinking Ahead Plan’ that you think first about what is important to you just now. This should help to make sure that all those involved in your care are aware of what your priorities are at all times.
“Planning ahead”
You might want to write about things you are looking forward to, important events coming up or things you want to do.

“Looking after me well”
For instance where you would like to be cared for and what kind of treatment and care you would want to have or not have. This kind of information can help the professionals looking after you try and make sure it happens.

“My concerns”
You can write about any worries you might have for example about yourself and your health, your family or a pet.

“Other important things”
Anything you feel is important but doesn’t fit anywhere else!

“Things I want to know more about”
You can use this section to keep track of any questions you want to ask and answers that you have got.

Where should I keep my plan?
You should keep your plan with you so that anyone involved with your care can see what is important to you.

Any more questions?
This plan is designed to help you talk to your doctor or nurse about the things that are important to you. Ask them for help to fill it in where you need it.
Important things to me just now

For example, the things that really matter to me, what I like and what I value.
Planning ahead

For example, important events coming up, things I want to do in the future, things that I want to carry on doing.
Looking after me well

For example, where I would like to be cared for, and any treatments I would or wouldn’t want.
My concerns
For example, things that worry me now, and any worries about what might happen in the future.
Other important things
Things I want to know more about
Some people with serious illnesses like to know about things that might be important now or in the future to them and to their families.

Some of these might be:

• Benefits advice
• Asking a person you can trust to speak for you and help make decisions about your health in the future (Welfare Power of Attorney) and your money and finances (Continuing Power of Attorney).
• A living will or an advance statement (these can be about what you would like and what you really wouldn’t want)
• Attempting or not attempting to restart my heart – Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Things I want to ask about are:

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Keeping track – each time you write in this Plan, you might like to write down in this section the date and the name of anyone who helped you.

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Useful Contact Details
You may want to use this section to write down useful names and telephone numbers.

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We would welcome any comments or suggestions about this booklet If you would like to do so, please go to:

www.palliativecareggc.org.uk/acp

This booklet was developed from work carried out by Dr K Boyd, NHS Lothian and Prof S Murray, University of Edinburgh.

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