

IMPORTANT NOTE

These explanations serve to provide a general explanation of the medical terms found on the Advance Care Plan Document. In no way is there the intention for them to plan individual patient care.

For all personal care interventions, it is always wise to discuss all personal problems with your doctor

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passes the feeding tube through a small cut done in the abdominal wall leading to the stomach (RIG or PEG tube). In the end-stage of dementia where the patient is at their end of life, it is generally accepted that tube feeding is not necessarily beneficial and can lead to avoidable suffering. Thus it is usually wise to not only consider if this procedure is of benefit or not, but one should also take note what are the patient's wishes and that of their family members about it.

What is palliative feeding or comfort feeding?

Palliative feeding or comfort feeding is giving food and drink by mouth even though there is a risk that the patient can choke in their food leading to aspiration to the lungs and chest infection. Comfort feeding is utilized to minimize suffering and distress incurred in the end of life through the use of tube feeding, whilst it also allows the patient to continue enjoying the pleasure of food and drink by mouth. This is a decision that has to be carried out with caution, where the values and wishes of the patient and relatives have to be taken into account. In this decision, there is also the need to involve in decision-making certain specialists particularly the Speech Language Pathologist, the Doctor, and the Nurse.

Lasting / Enduring Power of Attorney?

Lasting/Enduring power of attorney, is a special type of legal document by which, the donor who is still mentally capable to decide, would make a request through their Lawyer/Notary, through which he or she would give permission to a third person they trust, to act as their proxy,

in decisions regarding their care, finances, and estate. This permission continues even when in the future the donor of the attorney loses their mental ability to make decisions.

What are investigations or tests?

These are used to better understand what is the problem that the patient is suffering from, and to identify what care intervention would be necessary to treat the condition. These involve the use of blood tests, the use of X- Rays, and include the utilization of camera probes to examine the patient's internal organs. These investigations, do often lead to patient discomfort, and thus it is wise to understand if the patient would benefit from the burden of tests particularly if he or she is close to the end of life.

What is a ventilator machine?

A ventilator helps the patient to breathe when as a result of disease, infection, or injury he is not able to do so by himself. With the use of a ventilator the patient is given a sedative to tolerate a ventilator tube passed through the mouth, or through a cut done in the throat (tracheostomy).

What is CPR?

CPR or cardiorespiratory resuscitation is used when the patient is close to dying. CPR involves compressions of the chest, and the use of artificial breathing, in addition to the use of electrical shocks. In frail older adults suffering from advanced frailty and dementia, CPR is usually unsuccessful, actually, it can lead to additional suffering for the patient as it can lead to broken ribs and internal haemorrhage.



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Advance Care Plan

Information Leaflet
for Patients, Relatives
and Significant Others



What is mental capacity?

Mental capacity is the cognitive mental ability to be able to decide in such a way to show that you understand what you are doing, and also that you understand the consequences of your decision.

What is a best interests decision?

When you take a best interests decision for another person, you would be deciding for a person who has lost mental capacity. A best interests decision safeguards that person's needs, wishes, and values. In taking best interests judgments you would be considering what that person needs in his or her current state.

What is Guardianship?

Whoever takes the legal responsibility of being a Guardian, as authorized by the Guardianship Board, would have the authority to make decisions in the name of a person who is disabled, or has a mental condition. With guardianship, you, the Guardian can make decisions for the disabled patient about their health, finances, and estate, as decided by the Guardianship Board.

What is Palliative Care and Hospice?

Palliative care provides medical, social, and psychological care to a person who is suffering from a terminal condition. Palliative care gives priority to alleviating pain and suffering, appreciates which care interventions can be stopped as they are unnecessary or too burdensome, and also provides assistance to relatives both before and after the death of their loved ones. Hospice is based on the principles of palliative care but gives more attention to sustaining a good quality of life and takes care of the medico-social, spiritual and psychological needs of patients and their relatives.

What does aggressive curative care mean?

Aggressive curative care provides all tests and medical resources possible to achieve healing or cure. When a person is close to dying, it is usually wise that aggressive care is switched instead to palliative care. This is because close to the end of life, what is most important is that the person does not suffer and is pain-free.

What does organ failure mean?

This happens when the major body organs, namely, the heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys are so weak that despite medical treatment and the use of machines the patient cannot function effectively to achieve wellness for the person to live a near

normal life. This is often a sign that the patient is close to their end of life.

What is dementia?

Dementia is a medical condition that usually concerns older people. It leads to mental difficulties including memory loss, difficulty to find yourself around, loss of reasoning, difficulty in speech, mental confusion, and changes in personality and behaviour. In dementia, a person will eventually lose their ability to walk and function in their normal daily abilities. With time it leads to loss of weight, difficulty swallowing, and the patient would need a lot of support from carers.

What is a permanent coma?

Coma happens usually as a result of a severe illness or brain injury leading to loss of consciousness. In many situations that person in a coma would need the support of life-support machines to live.

What is a massive stroke?

Massive stroke usually happens when a big part of the brain dies as a result of arterial blockage or bleeding in the brain. In many cases, the patient would lose most of his or her capabilities to function including loss of ability to walk, eat, dress, walk, toileting and bathing. Certain patients, end up also suffering from dementia (see above). Whoever ends up suffering from a massive stroke would be in need of a lot of help.

What is metastatic cancer?

When cancer becomes metastatic, it means that it has spread to other parts of the body, including the bones, liver, and other organs. Wherever treatment cannot alleviate the situation, this is a bad sign that survival time may be shortened. In such situations, palliative care helps to alleviate pain and suffering.

What are disproportionate care and extraordinary care?

This happens when the care provided would be too much for that patient and would thus not be of any benefit to the said patient, to the point that it could even lead to increased suffering and distress.

What is tube feeding?

It is known that as a consequence of disease or injury, certain patients end up having serious problems swallowing food and drink by mouth. This condition can lead to choking on food, with food entering the lungs leading to severe lung infection. Whoever suffers from this condition, would also start to lose weight as a result of poor nutrition. In certain situations, it is worth considering initiating tube feeding to provide food, liquids, and access for taking medicines. There are basically two types of tube feeding, one utilizes a tube passing through the nose (Nasogastric NG tube), and the other type