

Most of us cannot imagine a time when we are unable to speak for ourselves but it may happen. Your loved ones may have to make difficult healthcare decisions for you. You can ease their burden by voicing your choices now.

What is Advance Care Planning?

ACP is a series of discussions to plan for your future health and personal care. It is about being in control of your life and knowing that your wishes will be honoured when you are unable to speak for yourself.

ACP involves:

- ✂ **Sharing** your personal values and beliefs
- ✂ **Exploring** what you might or might not want in certain medical situations
- ✂ **Choosing** someone to voice your wishes if you can no longer do so in the future
- ✂ **Writing** down your wishes and sharing your plan

Who is ACP for?

ACP is for everyone, regardless of age or health condition.

Making your wishes known saves your loved ones from having to make guesses about the type of care you might or might not want, should an unexpected medical emergency happen.

In these difficult situations, an ACP can help your doctors care for you in a way that matches your life values and goals. This gives them assurance and peace of mind that they are fulfilling your wishes.

Even if I'm too ill to speak one day, my ACP can guide my loved ones and doctors to care for me.

John's Story

John Tay may be in the pink of health, but he has already made his ACP.

John's mother was admitted to the hospital after a series of complications arising from her chronic heart illness. There, she met an ACP Facilitator who initiated a discussion with her and her family.

"My mother was always such a lively person and I'm happy that she could share her wishes with us. It gave us comfort to know that we were caring for her in the way that she wanted," recalls John.

The ACP experience made such an impact on John and his siblings that they have all started the conversation.

"ACP is not a legal document but it gives our loved ones assurance and peace of mind. I know I am not alone and I have my family to make the decisions together," said Mdm Esther Tay.

▶ Watch John's video on www.livingmatters.sg

You don't have to be sick to talk about the type of care you would or wouldn't want. Get everybody on the same page ahead of time, and not during a medical emergency.

Mr John Tay and his family

What should I do next?

Step

1

Think about it

- ✂ Consider what you need to live meaningfully and what would be important to you at the end of life.
- ✂ Understand your health and how it might change in the future.

Step

2

Discuss with your loved ones

- ✂ Talk to others about your wishes and goals for care in the future. This helps them better understand your decisions.
- ✂ Choose one or two trusted individuals to be your voice. Involve them as you make your plan.

TIP



The ACP discussion may include questions such as:

- What gives my life purpose?
- What do I need to live meaningfully?
- What are my feelings about using a machine to stay alive?
- Where do I want to be cared for if I become very sick?
- Who can I trust to be my voice when I cannot speak for myself?

Step

3

Put your wishes in a Plan

- ✂ Record your decisions and wishes on a document that you can share such as the 'My Care Wishes' workbook.
- ✂ Share and discuss your preferences with your doctor. Alternatively, you can document your preferences with the help of an ACP Facilitator.

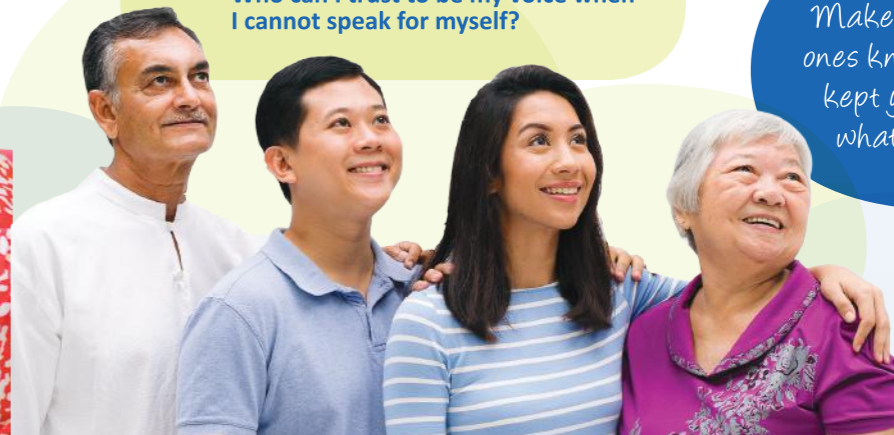
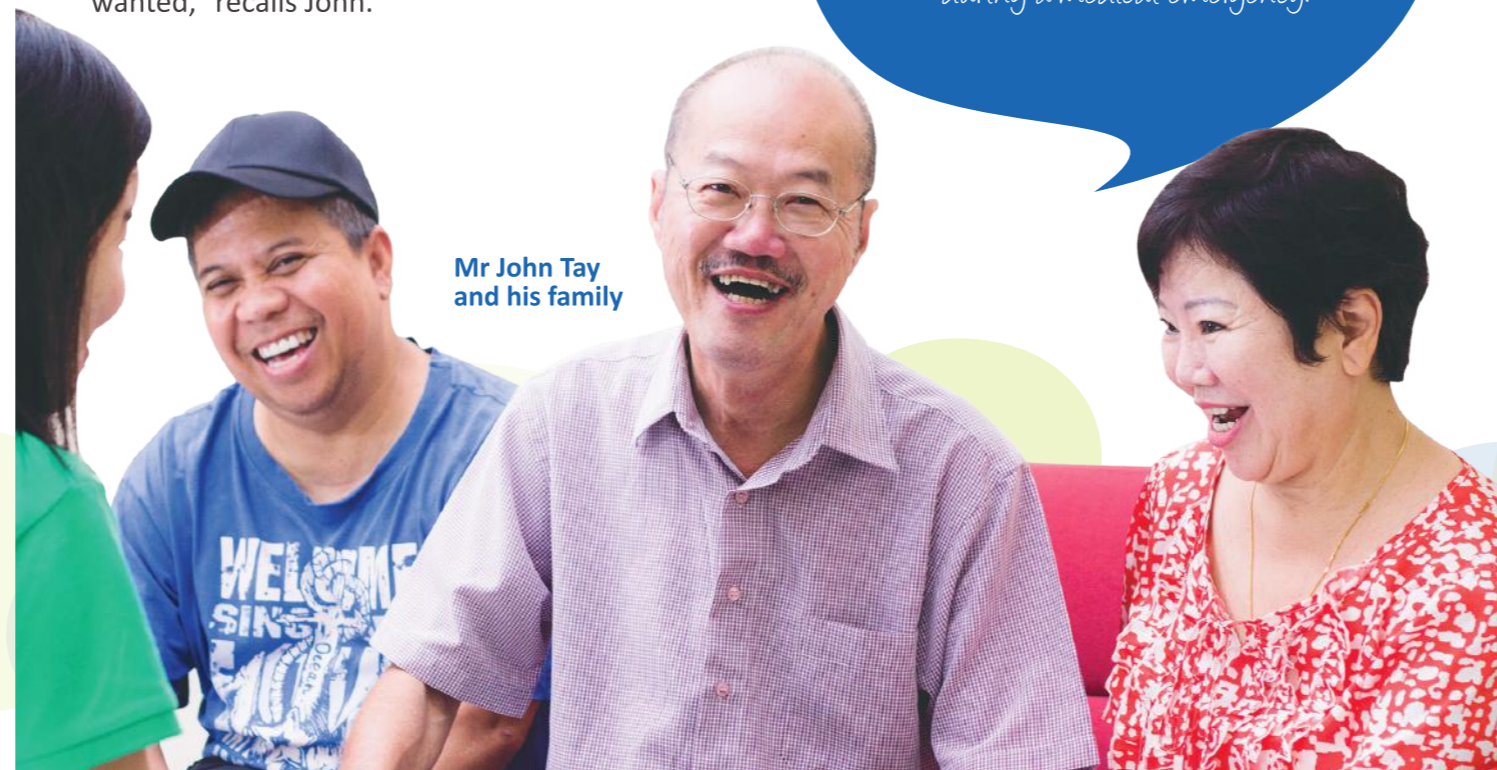
Step

4

Review your preferences

- ✂ Update your plan if your preferences change. This can happen with new experiences or changes to your health.
- ✂ Inform your loved ones and important others. Provide copies of your new plan so that they have the latest version.

Make sure your loved ones know where you've kept your ACP and what to do with it.



Planning for My Care



Other ways to plan ahead

As you discuss your care wishes with your loved ones, questions about completing legal documents may surface. These include:

Advance Medical Directive

Advance Medical Directive (AMD) is a legal advance directive stating your preference not to have extraordinary life-sustaining treatment.

How do I sign up?

The AMD is a legally-binding document that must be signed in the joint presence of a doctor and a witness who must not stand to gain from your death.

For more information visit:
www.moh.gov.sg/amd

Lasting Power of Attorney

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) appoints donee(s) to make financial or personal welfare decisions for you if you lose your mental capacity.

How do I sign up?

The LPA is a legally-binding document that needs to be certified by a Certificate Issuer after you've completed it. Visit the link below for a list Certificate Issuers.

For more information visit:
www.publicguardian.gov.sg

TIP

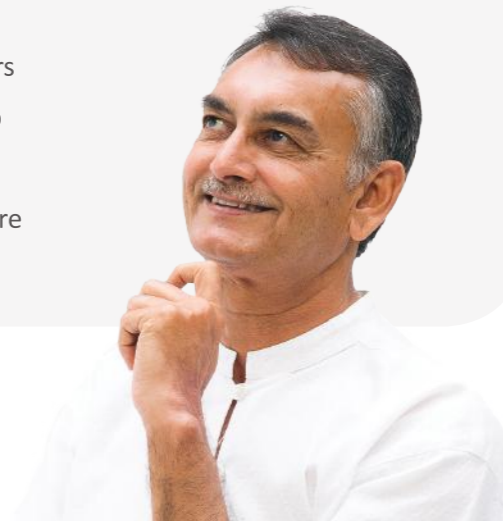


Do I need an ACP if I have an AMD or LPA?

ACP, AMD and LPA are different ways to plan ahead. Each serves its own purpose.

ACP allows individuals to explore their treatment and care preferences, while involving loved ones and important others in the decision-making process. AMD directs doctors to stop life-sustaining treatments when the patient is terminally ill.

LPA empowers donees to make financial and personal welfare decisions, with the exception of life-sustaining treatment.



Frequently-asked questions

When will my doctors act on the decisions in my ACP?

Your preferences may be used to guide your healthcare team if you are no longer able to make decisions for yourself. As long as you have the mental capacity to make decisions, you will be consulted upon for your consent on receiving or ending treatment.

How will my doctors know what my wishes are?

If you are seriously ill and cannot make your own healthcare decisions, the doctors may consult with your loved ones about your care options. Having discussed your wishes with you in advance, your loved ones can share your plan with the doctors.

Does having an ACP mean that the doctor won't treat me?

No. An ACP helps your doctor understand who you are and what matters to you, when you can no longer tell them yourself. Your doctor will always provide care that is in your medical best interest. This includes considering your views on matters like life-sustaining treatments.

Why do I need to have a preference about life-sustaining treatments?

Medical technology allows people to be kept alive even when a cure is no longer possible. Decisions about the use of machines and emergency treatments to keep you in that state need to be made. The ACP process allows your preferences on such matters to be made known to others when you can no longer speak for yourself.

Who can be my voice?

If you fall seriously ill one day and lose the ability to communicate, is there someone who can speak on your behalf? Does this person know your care goals and what it means for you to live meaningfully?

As you discuss your ACP wishes with your loved ones and important others, you may want to choose someone who can be your voice in the future. The person or persons you choose should:

- ♥ Be willing to speak **on your behalf**
- ♥ Know you well and understand **your wishes and concerns**
- ♥ Be able to tell your doctors about the care **you would like to receive**
- ♥ **Handle stressful situations** well



An initiative by



Supported by



Visit www.livingmatters.sg for more information about Advance Care Planning.