



Support sheet – Advance Decisions to Refuse Treatment (ADRT)

Description

An advance decision to refuse treatment (ADRT) is a decision that can be made in order to refuse a specific medical treatment in whatever circumstances that are stated. It will come into effect when the individual has lost capacity to give or refuse consent for treatment. This can include the choice to refuse treatment even if doing so might put an individual's life at risk. An advance decision is written by the individual, often with support from professionals, relatives or carers. They cannot be prepared if the individual lacks capacity

Key elements

- Making an advance decision is entirely voluntary and should not be made as a result of external pressure
- An advance decision can only be made by someone over 18 years of age
- An individual making an advance decision must have the capacity to do so
- The advance decision should specify the treatment which is to be refused and may specify the circumstances in which the refusal applies
- The decision must be valid
- The decision must be applicable to current circumstances
- If the advance decision is to apply (even if the person's life is at risk) it must be in writing, signed and witnessed
- An advance decision can only be used to refuse treatment not to demand treatment or to request procedures which are against the law e.g. assisted suicide
- A copy should be retained by the patient and (with consent) be retained in all relevant patient records

Associated links/documents

Advance Decisions to Refuse Treatment website: <http://www.adrtnhs.co.uk/index.html>

The Mental Capacity Act (2005) at a glance:

<https://www.scie.org.uk/mca/introduction/mental-capacity-act-2005-at-a-glance>

Court of Protection: <https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/court-of-protection>

My Living Will (Advance Decision builder): <https://www.mylivingwill.org.uk/as-examples-chronic-illness#:~:text=When%20I%20get%20the%20next,are%20in%20my%20Advance%20Decision.%22>