

Advance Health Directive (AHD)

What is an Advance Health Directive (AHD)?

An Advance Health Directive is a legal document completed by a competent adult that contains decisions about future medical treatment. It outlines the treatments (medical, surgical, and dental) that you would or would not consent to, including palliative care and life-sustaining measures. It also includes a values and preferences section where you can note the things that are most important to you about your health and care.

Examples of what the AHD outlines include your wishes about -

- CPR and assisted ventilation.
- Blood transfusions.
- Where you would like to be if nearing death.

What does an AHD not include?

- Wishes about Voluntary Assisted Dying.
- Organ and tissue donation.

When does an AHD come into effect?

An AHD only comes into effect if it applies to treatment a person requires, and only if the person becomes incapable of making or communicating their decisions. An example would be if you are unconscious and cannot tell medical staff whether you agree to a blood transfusion or not. If you have an AHD, medical staff can then refer to the AHD for direction.

What about Enduring Power of Guardianship?

An Enduring Power of Guardianship (EPG) is a legal document where you can appoint one or more people to make decisions about your lifestyle and health care if you can't make those decisions for yourself any more. The enduring guardian/s can make decisions about where you live, the support services you access, and the treatment you receive. **Enduring guardian/s cannot override decisions you have made in an Advance Health Directive.**

You can have both an AHD and EPG, but your AHD will override your EPG when it comes to treatment. This means that if you are unable to make a treatment decision yourself, the instructions in your AHD will be used instead of asking your enduring guardian to make these decisions on your behalf, unless the AHD is invalid or does not cover the required treatment.

What makes a valid AHD?

- You must be 18 years or older.
- You must have full legal capacity at the time of making the AHD.
- Make at least one treatment decision in Part 4 – My Advance Health Directive treatment decisions.
- The completed AHD must be signed in the presence of two witnesses (18 years or older). One witness must be a person who is authorised to witness statutory declarations in WA. See below for a complete list of authorised witnesses in Western Australia.

Where can I get an AHD?

Your AHD can be completed in hard copy or digitally. If completing digitally, you will need to print and sign the AHD. To obtain a hard copy to complete, you can speak to a medical professional or contact Department of Health WA Advance Care Planning Information Line on 9222 2300 to have one sent to you.

Alternatively, you can access a digital AHD by scanning the QR code or by visiting:

www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/~media/HWA/Documents/Healthy-living/End-of-life/Advance-Health-Directive

What do I do once I have signed my AHD?

- Make a certified copy.
- Upload a copy of your AHD to My Health Record.
- Store your AHD in a safe place.
- Tell those that are close to you/those who care for you that you have made an AHD. You can share a copy of your AHD with as many people as you like, including your family, friends, carers, enduring guardian/s, GP, specialist doctors or other health professionals.

You can also carry an AHD Alert Card in your wallet. Scan the QR code or visit www.health.wa.gov.au/~media/Files/Corporate/general-documents/Advance-care-planning/PDF/AHD_Alert_Card.pdf to access a printable version of the alert card, or contact the Department of Health Advance Care Planning Line on 9222 2300 to have one sent to you.

It is useful if you keep a list of those who have a copy of your AHD in the event you wish to revoke your AHD in the future.



AHD form



AHD Alert Card



Complete AHD guide

For more information and to access a complete guide to an AHD scan the QR code or visit:
www.health.wa.gov.au/~media/HWA/Documents/Healthy-living/End-of-life/AHD-Guide.pdf

Professions listed as authorised witnesses by the *Oaths, Affidavits and Statutory Declarations Act 2005* include:

- Academic (post-secondary institution)
- Accountant
- Architect
- Australian Consular Officer
- Australian Diplomatic Officer
- Bailiff
- Bank Manager
- Chartered secretary
- Chemist
- Chiropractor
- Company auditor or liquidator
- Court officer (Judge, magistrate, registrar or clerk)
- Defence Force officer
- Dentist
- Doctor
- Electorate Officer (State – WA only)
- Engineer
- Industrial organisation secretary
- Insurance broker
- Justice of the Peace (any State)
- Lawyer
- Local government CEO or deputy CEO
- Local government councillor
- Loss adjuster
- Marriage Celebrant
- Member of Parliament (State or Commonwealth)
- Minister of religion
- Nurse
- Optometrist
- Patent Attorney
- Physiotherapist
- Podiatrist
- Police officer
- Post Officer Manager
- Psychologist
- Public Notary
- Public Servant (State or Commonwealth)
- Real Estate agent
- Settlement agent
- Sheriff or deputy Sheriff
- Surveyor
- Teacher
- Tribunal officer
- Veterinary surgeon
- an authorised person under the *Commonwealth Statutory Declarations Act 1959*

Contact us today

Phone: (08) 9440 1663
Email: info@elcs.org.au
Web: www.elcs.org.au



Mirrabooka Office

10 Cobbler Place, Mirrabooka WA 6061

Mon – Thurs 9:00am – 4:00pm

Fri 9:00am – 3:00pm

Joondalup Office

Building 1, Edith Cowan University

270 Joondalup Drive, Joondalup WA 6027

Tue - Wed 9:00am – 4:00pm

Fri 9:00am – 3:00pm