



TOPIC 1

REFLECTING ON AND PLANNING FOR MEDICAL CARE.

Everyone has the right to decide about the kind of care they wish to receive (or refuse to receive) according to their personal values and preferences. However, there may be cases in which the person is unable to make their own decisions, for example because a cognitive disease such as dementia. Think ahead about what assistance we may need and how to communicate it in a way which will allow caregivers and/or relatives to ensure that the persons will is respected.

Module 2:

Planning for death (medium and long-term)

REFLECTING ON AND PLANNING FOR MEDICAL CARE – STEP BY STEP

- Access information about the current legal regulations and directives in your country and list what you can decide? To what extent does the law allow you to decide in advance about your medical care?
- Access information about typical future health conditions that you might find yourself in. Find out what they might entail.
- Make decisions about your future personal healthcare treatment, especially prognosis which includes the most invasive or life-threatening conditions.
- What values guide you in the decision? For example, which is more important for you: to prolong life, not to feel pain or not to feel like a prisoner in your own body?
- Think about the person (or persons) you would like to appoint as your proxy: you will have to nominate someone who will be legally entitled to enforce your decision. Who can this person be? Do you think she/he would accept this role? Why would they and wouldn't they?
- Once you have decided on a course of action draw up a formal plan. Access information about the procedures needed: how can you formalise your decisions so that they are respected and legally binding in case you are no longer capable to do it by yourself? What happens if you change your mind? Are there any costs involved?





...at the end of life



PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS YOU SHOULD TALK TO

- (a) Lawyer or Solicitor (check this it could be Solicitor for common law): it can be a private practitioner but also a volunteer from an NGO (check this against the legal frameworks in each country) working around the issues of end-of-life care. They can provide you with more information about the legal situation in your country and support you in preparing the documentation needed to formalise your choices.
- (b) Medical doctor: your doctor can help you understand the health conditions you might face and the correspondent treatments that it is likely you would undergo, the medical care options that might be proposed to you and what they entail in terms of impact on you.
- (c) Family members, friends and informal carers: openly discussing your wishes regarding future medical care with family members, friends and carers might be challenging but important for several reasons:
- It will help identify who could be the proxy.
 - It can relieve the persons near to you of the burden of taking these kinds of decisions on your behalf.
 - In case of any legal complications, they can be a witness to your wishes.

REFLECTIONS

- This flashcard provides ideas for reflection and suggestions in relation to information that should be gathered to make informed decisions about future medical care.
- It can be used in connection with the resources sections to link to further information and references at local, regional, and national level.
- It might be useful to use the flashcards to open discussion in a group, especially if applied to persons lacking a support network. The group dimension can make it easier to assess the pros and cons of a decision, but it can also be an opportunity to create new personal bonds and connections with peers.

TRAINER TIPS

This flashcard can be complemented by

- Links to local contacts, for example in relation to services and organizations supporting persons who can help plan future medical care.
- Links to the national legal systems in relation to the end of life.
- Links to the medical options offered by health care professionals.



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