



## **Book 1**

### **Let's Talk...**

# **About Understanding Advance Care Planning**





## Preparing for your Future...

There are 3 documents you can prepare that may be helpful to friends, family and health care providers.

They include:

1. A Will
2. A Continuing Power of Attorney for Property
3. A Power of Attorney for Personal Care

### 1. A Will...

A **Will** allows you to decide who will:

- Look after any children or other dependents and
- Inherit your property and money when you die

The process of writing a Will helps you think through these issues.



### 2. A Continuing Power of Attorney for Property...

If you become mentally incapable, a **Continuing Power of Attorney for Property** gives another person the authority to pay your bills, look after your tax filings and look after other financial matters without the intrusion of other agencies.

If you do not have a Continuing Power of Attorney for property, your financial affairs will be at risk of mismanagement (e.g. bills cannot be paid) until a guardianship can be established.

## Checklist...

- Get the information you need to make informed choices about health care treatments.
- Read Book 2: "Let's Talk... About the Role of a Substitute Decision Maker".
- Choose a person you trust who is willing to speak for you and honour your wishes if you cannot speak for yourself.
- Discuss your thoughts and choices with those close to you.
- Talk to your doctor about different treatments.
- Obtain a copy of Book 3 "Let's Talk...About Making an Advance Care Plan for Personal Care".
- Talk to your substitute decision maker, family and doctor about your choices.
- Discuss your choices often, especially when your medical condition changes.
- Give copies of your written advance care plan (Book 3) to your doctor, health care record, family members and friends, and keep a copy for yourself in an accessible place.
- Engage others in discussions about end-of-life and health care issues. Encourage them to complete their own advance care plan.
- Get to know end-of-life care services that are available to you, such as Hospice and palliative care providers.

## Regional Renal Program Resources

If you have any questions or wish assistance in completing a POA for personal care or an advance directive, please speak to a member of your renal health care team.



### 3. A Power of Attorney for Personal Care...

One of the most important decisions we encourage all adults to make is to think about who they would choose to make decisions for them if something happened and they were no longer able to communicate.

**A Power of Attorney for Personal Care** is a written document that states who you have chosen to be your substitute decision maker (SDM) in the event you are not capable of making these decisions yourself. You can name more than one power of attorney. When there is more than one, they can talk to and support each other.

Personal Care includes:

- Health care (e.g. extent of invasive medical procedures to prolong life)
- Nutrition (e.g. artificial feeding through a tube)
- Housing (i.e. where you will live, nursing home placements)
- Clothing (i.e. ensuring you have appropriate clothing)
- Hygiene (i.e. ensuring your personal needs are met)
- Safety (e.g. use of medication or physical restraints if needed)

#### What happens if I do not choose a SDM?

If you do not appoint a person in advance, the Health Care Consent Act (1996) tells healthcare providers who they can talk to in the event you are incapable and a medical decision is needed. The order of people who can make decisions for you and act as a substitute decision maker is:

1. Your spouse, common-law spouse or partner

2. Your child if 16 years of age or your parent
3. Your brother or sister
4. Any other relative by blood, marriage or adoption
5. The Office of Public Guardian and Trustee

## How to make an Advance Care Plan for Personal Care...

There are many things to talk about. **Please read Book 2: “Let’s Talk... About the Role of a Substitute Decision Maker”**. Book 2 describes in more detail how to choose a SDM and what discussions you need to have with them.

When you choose someone to be your Attorney for personal care/Substitute Decision Maker this person should be someone you trust to understand and uphold your wishes.

It is important to talk with this person about the kind of personal care you would want if you were unable to make decisions about your care in the future.

## Record Your Wishes...

An Advance Care Plan is any statement made by you about what kind of personal and medical care you want. It can be written, oral or recorded.

You may want to write your wishes so they are easy to understand and follow.

To help you document your wishes, the Renal Care Program has a workbook available **“Let’s Talk... About Making An Advance Care Plan for Personal Care”**.

Carefully make your statements. The most recent statement must be followed by your Substitute Decision-Maker.

If you have completed a POA for personal care and documented your care wishes, provide a copy to:

- Your attorney for personal care
- Your doctor and other healthcare providers
- Family and friends that you want to have this information

## Resources...

### Legal Resources

A lawyer is NOT required in order to complete an advance directive or appoint an Attorney for Personal Care. You can create a POA by using the online resource provided at the website below, or contact the Public Guardian and Trustee office at 1-800-366-0335 or <http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/pgt/poa.pdf>

A copy of a POA for personal care document is included in **Book 3: “Let’s Talk...About Making An Advance Care Plan”**.

A Lawyer can help you make your Will and complete the Power of Attorney documents, if you wish.

If you do not have a lawyer and would like to talk to one, the Lawyer’s Referral Service run by the Law Society of Upper Canada can help. You can contact them at: 1-800-268-8326 or [www.lsuc.on.ca/public/a/findings/lrs](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/public/a/findings/lrs)