

SA Palliative Care Community Pharmacy Update

A joint initiative of the South Australian Palliative Care Services

Recent changes to South Australian Legislation empowers adults to document preference for their future health care, end of life care, preferred living arrangements and other personal matters when they are unable to do so themselves.

Advance Care Directives

In South Australia, on 1 July 2014, the new Advance Care Directives Act 2013 came into effect. This coincided with the availability of a new Advance Care Directive Form (the ACD Form), which is available online and in hardcopy. This new form replaced three separate documents:

- > Enduring Power of Guardianship;
- > Anticipatory Direction; and
- > Medical Power of Attorney.

Importantly, any wishes documented on these three forms prior to 1 July 2014, remain valid. There is no need to update existing paperwork unless the individual's circumstances have changed (i.e. death or loss of capacity of a substitute decision maker). Under these circumstances, the ACD Form should be utilised.

The ACD Form now applies a person-centred approach to health care by placing the individual at the centre of their own care while considering the needs of any carers. Importantly, it only takes effect if the individual is unable to make their own decisions, whether temporarily or permanently.

In addition, the ACD Form provides clinicians with protections when the individual lacks capacity to make decisions.

An individual completing the ACD Form:

- > Documents their unique values, wishes and instructions; and/or
- > Establishes a clear decision-making framework; and/or
- > Appoints Substitute Decision-Makers (SDM).

The ACD is activated once the individual is incapacitated and the clinician is obliged to:

- > Seek consent of the SDM (if appointed);
- > Follow relevant binding refusals of healthcare;
- > Consider any nonbinding advisory instructions; and
- > Try to prevent outcomes or interventions the individual wanted to avoid.

The ACD Form must be signed (including initials on each page) by the individual and authorised witness. In signing the ACD Form, witnesses vouch for a person's capacity. Importantly, authorised witnesses must be devoid of conflict in interest when signing (e.g. someone responsible for managing the individual's health). Unrelated pharmacists are therefore ideal for witnessing ACD Forms.

Individuals should be encouraged to keep the ACD Form in a safe yet accessible place for when they are required. Certified copies should be made for the GP, specialist, hospital and family to have on file.

This information applies specifically to the development of Advance Care Directives in South Australia. For other jurisdictions, refer to local guidelines.

Useful Resources

- > [SA Health Advance Care Directive website](#)
- > [Advance Care Directive website](#)

For more information

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