hospice UK

Dying Matters

'Let's talk about it

Things to do before you die

What do you want?

None of us want to think about getting ill and dying. But having a plan makes it easier for you and your loved ones when you are dying. Thinking about things like making a will, deciding what kind of care we'd like, or by making clear our wishes, can make our last days easier for us and the time after our death easier for our families and friends.

Here are a few things to think through so you and your loved ones will have fewer things to worry about when you are dying.

1. Make a will

Writing a will allows you to plan what happens to your money and possessions after you die. You can also let people know about your funeral wishes. Having a will in place also makes it easier for your loved ones to cope after you've gone.

If you die without a will, your possessions will be allocated according to set rules, rather than according to your wishes.

You can get started writing a will yourself with booklets and packs available from banks, shops and supermarkets. It is usually best to go over your will with a solicitor to make sure all is well.

2. Make a funeral plan

There are lots of different funeral options available, and you can leave written wishes about your funeral and what should happen to your body with those you care about, or in a will. You can even make arrangements well in advance with the help of a funeral director. This makes things easier for your family, by making your choices clear. The **My Funeral Wishes** leaflet on the Dying Matters website is a great place to start.

3. Start planning for your future care and support

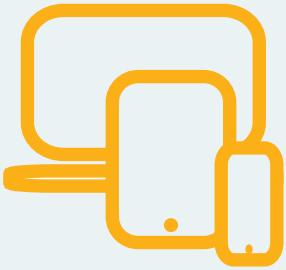
None of us know how things will turn out as we get older. It's possible that many of us will need caring for, or might lose capacity to make decisions ourselves.

You can talk to your family and healthcare professionals (for example, your GP) about the sort of care you'd like if you become dependent or seriously ill. You might want to consider where you'd like to be cared for, if there are any treatments you'd refuse, and even who would make decisions for you if you are unable to. A good place to start is asking yourself: "What's important to me?". It's important to write down your plans so that those who care for you have a record.

4. Make your thoughts on organ donation known

The law is changing so that more people can benefit from donated organs. If you want to find out more, contact **NHS Blood and Transplant**: www.organdonation.nhs.uk

5. Manage your digital legacy



Ever wondered what would happen to your social media accounts or blogs or websites after you die? How about the information on your phone, or your personal computer, or even the cloud? Given how much of our lives is on the internet now, it pays to take some time to understand the end of life policies and processes available for each of the digital sites or assets we use or own. After making your decisions about how you want your data to be treated after you die, make sure to let someone know so they can carry out your wishes.

For more information, visit **The Digital Legacy Association**: https://digitallegacyassociation.org

6. Make sure your loved ones know your plans

Consider talking through your plans with those close to you and give them the opportunity for input, especially if they are to carry out your wishes. If you have important documents or notes about your care, inheritance or funeral, keep them in a safe place and let loved ones know where they are. If the documents are hard to find, your wishes may not be carried out.

More information on how to get started can be found on the **Dying Matters website**: www.dyingmatters.org

Create a lasting memory of someone special. Donate to Hospice UK.

The Dying Matters coalition is led by Hospice UK, the national charity for hospice and palliative care. We support over 200 hospices throughout the UK that care for over 200,000 patients and their families a year.

A gift to Hospice UK is a special way to honour the life of your loved one. By doing so, you are remembering them through helping others to receive the very best care at the end of their life.

You can create a lasting memory of someone special by:

- giving a donation to celebrate their life
- dedicating a leaf on the beautiful Hospice UK Tree of Life in their name
- undertaking a challenge or hosting an event to honour their memory
- leaving a gift in your Will to support the sustainability of our work as a lasting legacy of your loved one.

We are here to help

However you choose to remember someone, we are here to help. To create your memory, please see our website: www.hospiceuk.org/support-us or call 020 7520 8266.

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Hospice UK leads the Dying Matters Coalition. Charity registered in England and Wales No. 1014851 and in Scotland No. SC041112.

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For more information visit:

www.dyingmatters.org

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