What is an advance decision?
Think ahead, plan ahead, share your wishes

There may be times in your life when you think about the consequences of becoming seriously ill or disabled. This may be at a time of ill health, as a result of a life changing event, or simply because you wish to plan ahead for the unexpected.

An advance decision makes your wishes clear so that these can be taken into account in the future when decisions are being made in your ‘best interests’:

- You can have discussions of your wishes with your carers, partner or relatives
- Include anything that is important to you no matter how trivial it seems
What can an advance decision cover?

An advance decision can cover any aspect of your future health or social care needs. This could include:

- Where you would like to be cared for, for example at home or in a hospital, a nursing home, or a hospice
- Who the important people are to consult with when decisions need to be made
- How you like to do things, for example if you prefer showers or baths, or like to sleep with the light on
- How you want any religious or spiritual beliefs to be reflected in your care
- Concerns about practical issues, for example, who will look after your pets if you become ill
- If you wish to refuse a specific treatment, consider making an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (ADRT)
- It is recommended you seek the advice of an experienced healthcare professional if making an ADRT
- If you make an ADRT that is life sustaining it must be in writing, signed and witnessed.

Provide copies to those who need to know your wishes e.g. nurse, doctor, carer or family member

How do I make an advance decision?

- You need to have the mental capacity to do so
- It can be verbal, but better in writing, adding your signature and a date makes it clearer (no special form required).
- You can do it yourself, with support from relatives, carers, or health and social care professionals if you wish
- It is important to share it with relatives, carers and care professionals
- Review it from time to time to make sure it still reflects your wishes.

For further information, please visit the Leeds Directory website www.leedsdirectory.org