

# What is an Advance Statement?

An Advance Statement is a record of your wishes and preferences. If you lack the mental capacity to make decisions in the future, other people can use it to help make decisions in your best interests. It is not legally binding but it makes your views clear and must be taken into account.

## What could an Advance Statement cover?

You can use an Advance Statement to cover any aspect of your future health or social care needs. This could include:

- How you want any religious or spiritual beliefs to be reflected in your care
- Where you would like to be cared for, for example at home or in a hospital, a nursing home, or a hospice
- How you like to do things, for example if you prefer a shower instead of a bath, or like to sleep with the light on
- Concerns about practical issues, for example, who will look after your pets if you become ill.

Advance Statements can also be used to let the people treating you know who you would like to be consulted when a decision has to be made.

## How do I complete an Advance Statement?

You can only make an Advance Statement if you have the mental capacity to do so. You may just wish to tell people what you want to happen in the future, but it is often better to put this in writing. It will make your views much clearer.

If you are going to put your Advance Statement in writing, **you do not need a special form**. You can just write or type the Advance Statement yourself, with support from relatives, carers, or health and social care professionals if you wish. It is a good idea to sign and date your Advance Statement so that it is clear that it is your wishes that have been written down.

People will only be able to act on your wishes, if they know about your Advance Statement. You should keep your Advance Statement somewhere safe and tell people where it is in case they need to find it. Review it from time to time to make sure you are still happy with what it says.

## More information – Mental Capacity

The Office of the Public Guardian has a range of information leaflets. To order a copy, telephone 0300 456 0300; to download them go to: [www.justice.gov.uk/protecting-the-vulnerable/mental-capacity-act](http://www.justice.gov.uk/protecting-the-vulnerable/mental-capacity-act)