



Home



Nursing Home

Hospital



Advocacy for Nursing Home Residents

About Us

Sage Advocacy is the National Advocacy Service for Older People. It also supports vulnerable adults and healthcare patients in certain situations where no other service is able to assist.

Our team of experienced advocates is available right across the Republic of Ireland in all settings: homes, day centres, respite facilities, congregated care settings/nursing homes, hospitals, hostels, hospices and in the process of transition between them.

Our services are free of charge and confidential. Sage Advocacy ensures that a person's voice is heard, that their wishes are taken into account and that they are assisted, in whatever ways necessary, to be involved in decisions that affect them.

In 2022...

1506

ADVOCACY
REFERRALS

3027

INFORMATION
& SUPPORT

26

STAFF

33

VOLUNTEERS

€1,778,056 PUBLIC
FUNDING



Sage Advocacy – Our Mission

“ To promote, protect and defend the rights and dignity of vulnerable adults, older people and healthcare patients. ”

Nothing about you / without you

Role of Advocacy

- **An advocate can support you to express your views and wishes about the decisions that affect your life.**
- **An advocate will make sure that your voice is heard and acted on.**
- **They can help you challenge decisions about your care and support that you disagree with.**
- **They can help you stand up for your rights.**
- **They can support with filling in forms, writing letters and meeting with officials if you need help to organise your personal affairs or to change something about your care or living situation.**



Some of the issues we can help with

Planning Ahead

Questions about Next of Kin

Safeguarding concerns

Nursing Home Support Scheme / Fair Deal

Nursing home issues

Financial

Legal

Assisted Decision Making

We take instructions from you alone

An advocate's work with you is **FREE, CONFIDENTIAL** and **INDEPENDENT** of family, service provider or systems interests.

- The purpose is to ensure that **your voice** is listened to and your views taken into account.
- You set the agenda. The advocate will only take action that you have given **consent** for. The advocacy plan will be agreed with you.
- The advocate has no other interest than to promote, support and defend your voice and rights. It is a one-to-one professional relationship.




Non-Instructed Advocacy

- Sage Advocacy can provide non-instructed advocacy if you need support but it is not possible for you to communicate your consent to it.
- We can act on this basis in order to safeguard your human rights.
- If you cannot put across your views and come to decisions, we will gather information and insights to build a picture of your wishes, thoughts, beliefs and preferences in life – how you lead your life and what is important to you. Based on this we put you at the centre of thinking about how to provide support.
- We will represent your interests and support you to participate as fully as possible in decision making.



How to access an advocate



 **(01) 536 7330**

You can call Sage Advocacy's Information and Support Service for help to complete a referral form



 **info@sageadvocacy.ie**

You can fill in the [referral form](#) or get support to complete it and email it to the address above, or post to **Sage Advocacy, 24-26 Upper Ormond Quay, Dublin D07 DAV9**

Next...

- We will contact you and arrange to meet
- We will seek your consent to be supported by Sage Advocacy
- We will work out, together, what the key issues are that you want to address. We will explore your options and agree a plan

Sage Advocacy's Quality Standards

1

Respect

Reflecting the right of every person to be treated with dignity and respect, including each individual's right to privacy, confidentiality and self-determination.

2

Social Justice

Promoting equal treatment with other people in respect of access to basic goods, services and protections and a positive affirmation of social solidarity.

3

Competence and Compassion

Demonstrating high levels of skill, competency, compassion and consistency on the part of advocates.

4

Accessibility

Available in a manner that is convenient and easily accessible to people who require support.

5

Independence

Structurally, operationally and psychologically independent from health and social care service providers and representing only the will and preferences of people receiving support.

6

Accountability

Acting with integrity and responsibility and engaging with people who use the service and with other stakeholders in an honest and transparent manner.



Asserting your rights

Your right to make your own decisions



- You may be living in a place and situation with its own rules and restrictions – but **you have options and rights**. The nursing home providers also have duties that they must live up to.
- [This document](#) from HIQA has pointers (**pages 8-11**) on what you are entitled to expect of your nursing home service. For example, your privacy and dignity must be respected and you should have a choice of interesting activities that meet your needs and preferences. You must be safeguarded from abuse and neglect and your safety and welfare should be promoted. You can **exercise choice in your daily life**.
- Your rights and choices belong to **YOU**: your ‘Next of Kin’ does not have the say on things just because you’re being cared for. Indeed, ‘Next of Kin’ has no legal standing. If someone other than yourself is to be consulted on matters of importance to you, it should be a person who you trust and choose – kin or otherwise. You have the right to give your input, to be listened to and to get the support you need to make informed decisions.

Next of Kin

A person's next of kin does **not** have legal authority to make decisions or give consent on a person's behalf. The term 'next of kin' has no legal standing whatsoever.



Your constitutional right to liberty

Article 40.4.1 of the Irish Constitution states: 'No citizen shall be deprived of his personal liberty save in accordance with law'.

- Your nursing home is a place of care and should never be a place of control. It should be the case that you live here because you choose to and it is where you want to be, or you freely agree that living here is the best option for your needs.
- If you have made a decision that you want to leave the nursing home, and nobody else has put pressure on you to make that decision, an advocate can support you in exploring your options to move elsewhere or to return home via a safe and planned discharge.
- Actions such as limiting your access to outdoor recreational areas; inappropriately giving sedation medications; or restraining you physically can also infringe your right to liberty.



Your right to make a complaint

- You have the right to make a complaint and to appropriate redress.
- Your nursing home has a legal duty to provide an accessible and effective complaints procedure. Details should be in your contract.
- If the procedure is not clear, bring your concerns to the attention of management as soon as possible and ask them to advise who you should direct your complaint to, and what you should expect of the process.
- If you are unhappy with how the nursing home has dealt with your complaint, the Office of the Ombudsman can examine it after you have exhausted the in-house complaints procedure. The type of complaints the Ombudsman can investigate, and information on how to complain can be found [here](#).



Safeguarding

- We all have the right to be safe and to live a life free from harm. **Safeguarding means putting measures in place to promote and protect people's human rights and their health and wellbeing, and empowering people to protect themselves.**
- The nursing home has a responsibility to do everything possible to prevent harm occurring as a result of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- If harm occurs or is likely to occur, the nursing home must respond quickly and effectively to stop it and report it.
- If there is an immediate and serious risk of harm to yourself or someone that you know, call An Garda Síochána on **999** or 112. If the risk is serious but not urgent, contact your local Garda station. If you need to remain anonymous, freephone the **Garda confidential line – 1800 666 111.**
- Contact the **HSE Information Line – freephone 1800 700 700** – for information about how to seek help from your local HSE Safeguarding and Protection Team.



The right to make or change a will

- A **solicitor** is the best person to advise you about making a will and they can make sure that your will is legally valid.
- Making a will ensures that **your wishes** about what happens to your money and property after you die are **known** and **followed**.
- A will is a legal document that **must be in writing** and the end of it **signed** by you in the presence of two witnesses, who will also add their signatures while you are present.
- You must be able to understand the will and its effects. The solicitor will determine your 'testamentary capacity' at the time you are taking action. **You are presumed to have capacity unless proven otherwise.**
- A will is only valid if it is made **voluntarily**. Pressure in connection with wills is **financial abuse**. Contact An Garda Síochána, your local HSE Safeguarding and Protection Team, or both, if this is a concern.
- **You do not have to make a will.** If you die without doing so, the law of succession sets out who should inherit your possessions.



The importance of planning ahead

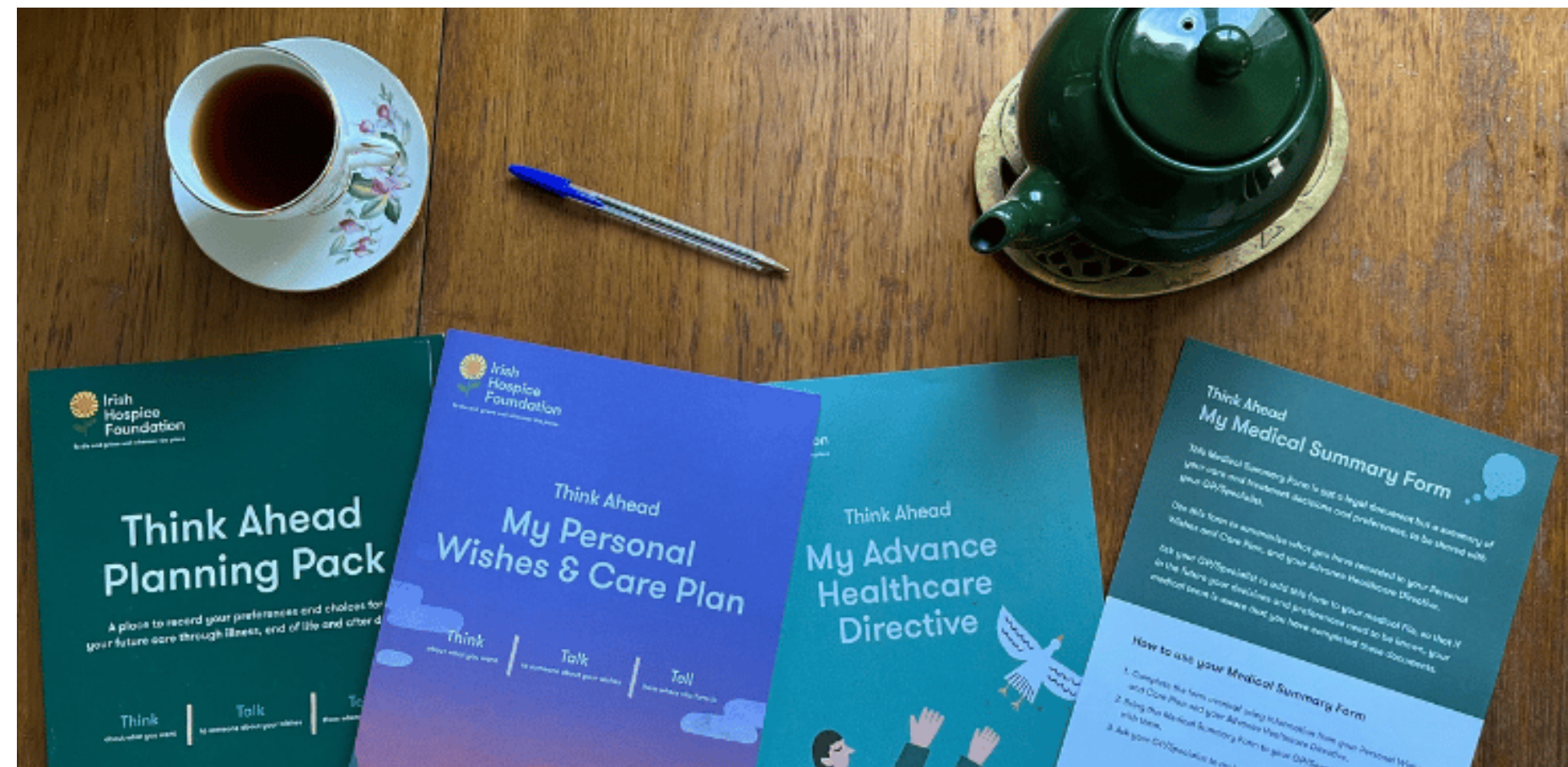
Think in advance about important future decisions, talk with those you trust and make a written record of your wishes.

That way, if a time comes when – because of serious illness or increased frailty – you are not able to make decisions, then your choices about your care and your personal affairs can be known and acted on.

And there will be less opportunity for anyone to exploit you in a time of vulnerability.

Maybe you've already considered these steps?

1. Appoint an Enduring Power of Attorney
2. Make known where you would like to be cared for
3. Make your healthcare preferences known
4. Plan your Finances



The Think Ahead Planning Pack – available at www.thinkahead.ie or by calling 01 679 3188 – is an excellent tool for planning ahead. Once you've filled it in, keep it safe, as you would a will; and tell those who are important to you where to find it; or share a copy with them.

Enduring Power of Attorney

If you do not currently need support with decision-making, but wish to plan ahead for a time when this could become more difficult, you can make an [enduring power of attorney](#).

This lets you **appoint someone you trust to act on your behalf** to make certain decisions (about your personal welfare, property and finances) in the event that you are unable.

First you **choose your attorney(s)**; and you **choose what decisions they can make on your behalf**. You write and sign what you've decided; and have the document signed by the attorney and two witnesses.

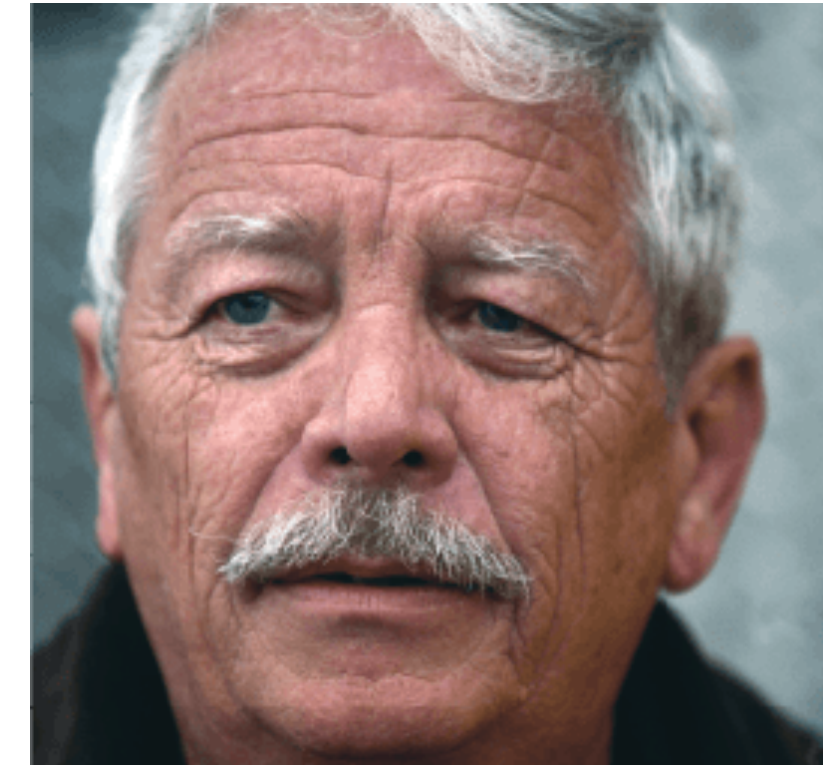
Next, **within three months you must register the arrangement with the Decision Support Service (DSS)**. The fee to register is €30. Attorneys must report to the DSS when there is a need to bring the power into force (the fee to do so is €90); and the DSS supervises the arrangement and ensures that the attorneys do their job correctly.



www.decisionsupportservice.ie

Advance Healthcare Directive

- A written statement about the medical or surgical treatment you want / do not want in the future.
- Ensures that you are always treated according to your preferences, beliefs and values.
- Provides healthcare professionals with important information about you and your choices in relation to treatment.
- An Advance Healthcare Directive is a legal document that must be signed in the presence of 2 witnesses.
- The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 provides a legal framework for Advance Healthcare Directives in Ireland.



Supported Decision-Making



seirbhís tacaíochta
cinnteoireachta
decision support service

The Decision Support Service promotes your rights and interests if you need support with decision-making.

Enduring power of attorney is one of five decision support arrangements that the Decision Support Service assists with.

If you have no current issues with decision-making but want to set out your wishes should support be required in the future, the two planning ahead arrangements are:

- **Advance healthcare directive**
- **Enduring power of attorney**

If you currently find difficulty in making certain decisions – *if you face challenges in understanding, retaining, or weighing up the necessary information; or in communicating your decision* – there are **three levels of support arrangements** that can support you to make a specific decision at a specific time:

- **Decision-making assistance agreement** (Appoint someone you trust to help you get the information you need; help explain it; help you to understand and weigh up the options. They can also help to let others know what you've decided.)
- **Co-decision-making agreement** (Write down what decisions you are unable to make on your own and give someone the legal authority to make these decisions jointly with you.)
- **Decision-making representation order** (If you cannot make certain decisions, even with support, the court may appoint a decision-making representative to decide specific matters on your behalf, giving regard to your wishes.)



The Assisted Decision-Making Acts



[Play the video online](#)



SageAdvocacy.ie



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Nothing about you

without you