

What is Advanced Care Planning?

People everywhere share certain ideas about what makes a 'good death.'

For many these ideas include being:

- Free of pain and other symptoms
- With friends and family
- Listened to
- Able to decide about medical treatments
- Treated with respect
- Not being a burden

Advance care planning is a process that offers an opportunity for you to think and talk about these things while you are still well enough to do so. As long as you are able to understand and communicate with your health care team, you will be asked to make your own health care decisions. However, no one knows what tomorrow will bring.

A sudden severe flare-up of your COPD may cause you to be too sick to be able to take part in making your own health care decisions at the time care is needed. Your health care team will then look to someone else (usually a family member) to make these decisions for you.

Making an advance care plan now can help your family or close friends and health care providers better understand exactly the wishes, values and goals you want to guide your care and treatment at such a time.

Advance care planning can help to answer questions like:

- Who do you want to make your health care decisions for you if you become unable to?
- Are there health care treatment(s) you would want/not want to have if your doctor offered them?
- Would you accept or refuse life support and life-prolonging medical interventions for certain conditions?
- Would you want life support if it was only prolonging your dying and there was little hope you would ever get better enough to come off it?
- What are your preferences should you need residential care and not be able to be cared for at home?
- Do you have any religious, spiritual, or cultural preferences you want honored at the end of life?

It is our belief that a major illness crisis is the wrong time to be asked to think about these questions for the first time. So we offer advance care planning to all patients and families enrolled in [The INSPIRED COPD Outreach Program](#) and support them to have these discussions. Of course the choice is yours and there are no penalties for refusing this opportunity. The INSPIRED COPD Outreach Program team will continue to care for you and your family no matter what you decide about advance care planning.