



When to think about palliative care

A palliative care approach to care can last for years, relieving suffering at every point from diagnosis to death. That means managing both the symptoms of disease and side effects of treatments such as pain, nausea and depression.

If you are caring for a loved one with a terminal illness you will, at some point, need to think, and talk, about options of palliative or hospice care. Palliative care promotes the person's best quality of life – as defined by the individual. It is beneficial at any age and at any stage of illness. This differs from hospice care, which is specifically for anyone who has been diagnosed with six months or less to live.

Palliative care offers solutions for pain, symptoms, and stress of serious illness, or the treatments to cure and/or manage illness. Hospice care patients are those who are no longer undertaking curative treatments.

Starting this conversation early on in a diagnosis will make it easier to have difficult and challenging discussions later on. See our **top 10 tips: having difficult conversations** for more advice and guidance.

You may want to consider applying for **Power of Attorney. A lasting power of attorney (LPA)** is a legal document that lets your loved one (the 'donor') appoint one or more people (known as 'attorneys') to help or to make decisions on their behalf.

This gives the individual the choice of who decides what happens to them if they have an accident or an illness and cannot make their own decisions (they 'lack mental capacity').

The cared-for must be 18 or over and have mental capacity (the ability to make your own decisions) when they make you LPA.

You do not need to live in the UK or be a British citizen.

There are 2 types of LPA:

- **Health and Welfare** - use this LPA to give an attorney the power to make decisions about things like:
 - daily routine, for example washing, dressing, eating
 - medical care, moving into a care home and/or life-sustaining treatment
- **Property and Financial affairs** - Use this LPA to give an attorney the power to make decisions about money and property, for example:
 - managing a bank or building society account
 - paying bills
 - collecting benefits or a pension
 - selling your home

You can choose to make one type or both.

Contact the **Office of the Public Guardian** if you need help.

customerservices@publicguardian.gov.uk

Telephone: **0300 456 0300**

Textphone: 0115 934 2778

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 9am to 5pm

Wednesday, 10am to 5pm