

Advance Directives (sometimes called Living Wills)

These are generally instructions provided by a patient relating to a condition which may arise in the future.

This Guide explains how the Practice deals with an Advance Directive and what the Patient's responsibilities are.

It is not a legal guide, nor is the information provided necessarily complete or binding in all circumstances.

Practice Policy

- The Practice abides by the British Medical Association (BMA) and other legal guidelines for advance directives.
- Each request from a Patient will be considered by that patient's own GP.
- Appropriate advice will be offered relating to the consequences of the request.
- The Practice supports the principle of patient choice in the provision of treatment and will take the Directive into account in its provision of treatment.

How to register an Advance Directive with the Practice

- Bring the original document, photo identification and signature (e.g. Passport or Photo Driving Licence).
- Make an appointment at least 3 days in advance with your GP, advising the Receptionist that an Advance Directive is to be discussed.

What the Practice will do

- We will make copies of your documents and return the originals to you.
- Your GP will study the content of your documents to prepare for the consultation.
- At the consultation, your GP will discuss with you the clinical implications of your decision and take into account your health situation to ensure that you fully understand the nature of your request.
- Your GP may ask you about your Advance Directive again in the future if you come for a consultation.

Our medical records will be updated with an image of your documents and an alert placed on your record which will be seen each time your record is opened.

We will provide information that an advance directive exists to other health professionals involved with your treatment as needed, e.g. where a hospital or other referral is necessary.

Patient Responsibilities

- Maintain and securely retain your original Advance Directive document.
- Regularly re-affirm in writing that the Advance Directive document is still valid – it is recommended that this is done every 12 months.
- Ensure that your family and close friends are aware of your Advance Directive document and where it is kept.

What the Practice will NOT do

- Remind you to review or update your directive.
- Monitor your treatment elsewhere (other than supply a copy of your directive).
- Express views on the acceptability or legality of the directive in the wide variety of potential future clinical circumstances or treatments which may be needed.
- Be responsible for the provision of Advance Directive information to other health providers where the Practice has not been involved in the care process (e.g. private clinics, temporary registration elsewhere, etc.)