

**Media Release**16 April 2018
**First conversation kicks off: National Advance Care Planning Week**
Community members and health care sector leaders today are attending an event at Eastern Health’s Box Hill Hospital to launch [National Advance Care Planning Week](https://www.advancecareplanning.org.au/acpweek) and urging Australians to make their future health care wishes known.

Minister for Aged Care and Indigenous Health, the Hon. Ken Wyatt MP was speaking at the event to officially launch the initiative, which has resulted in more than 100 awareness-raising events being hosted across the country in its inaugural year.

From a Men’s Shed gathering in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia to a community health event in Cape Barren Island in Tasmania – the initiative is starting important conversations across the nation.

“It is important that people have information to make informed choices about their health care. Knowing their options, and taking steps to inform their family or carers about their decisions and preferences can help ensure people get the right type of treatment for them at the right time,” said Minister Wyatt.

“Sometimes these are difficult topics and difficult decisions, so it is important people are supported to make the right choices for them.

National Advance Care Planning Week is run by Advance Care Planning Australia, which is an initiative of Austin Health.

“We’ve been delighted by the public and health care sector response to National Advance Care Planning Week. With over 100 events, it’s clear we’ve benefitted from strong support from the health care sector,” said Dr Karen Detering, Medical Director of Advance Care Planning Australia.

At the event Minister Wyatt will also release the new Advance Care Planning in Aged Care Guide, a new resource to help aged care residents, families and aged care providers better support individual choices in their health care. The Guide was developed by Advance Care Planning Australia in partnership with the National Ageing Research Institute.

National Advance Care Planning Week has recruited some of Australia’s most renowned health care, policy and research leaders across Australia as ambassadors, including Ms Liz Callaghan, CEO of Palliative Care Australia.

Australians can get involved in [National Advance Care Planning Week](https://www.advancecareplanning.org.au/acpweek) by visiting the website and locating an event near them or finding out more information.

www.acpweek.org.au

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**What is advance care planning?**Advance care planning promotes care that is consistent with your goals, values, beliefs and preferences. It prepares you and others to plan for future health care and a time when you may no longer be able to communicate those decisions yourself.

 **Key facts**

* Around 50% of people will not be able to make their own end-of-life medical decisions[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Less than 15% of Australians have documented their preferences[[2]](#footnote-2)
* A third of Australians will die before the age of 75
* 85% of people die after a chronic illness, not a sudden event
* Research shows that advance care planning can reduce anxiety, depression and stress experienced by families and that they are more likely to be satisfied with their loved one’s care

**About Advance Care Planning Australia**Advance Care Planning Australia (ACPA) is a national program funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, enabling Australians to make the best choices for their life and health care.

ACPA increases advance care planning resources across health sectors and NGOs, improves workforce capability, produces information resources for diverse consumers and communities, and builds the evidence base.

 **Media enquiries**Please contact us for interview with an advance care planning expert or individuals who can share personal stories about advance care planning.

Download our event media kit, visit the [media page](https://www.advancecareplanning.org.au/acpweek/media?utm_source=Media%20release_24%20Jan&utm_medium=referal&utm_campaign=24%20Feb%202018).

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1. Scott et al, 2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. White et al, 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)