

How to plan for the future



How to use this factsheet



This is an easy read factsheet.

This means we use pictures to help explain words.



The Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) wrote this factsheet. When you see the word 'we' it means the people who work at OPA.

bold

Hard words are **bold**.

not bold

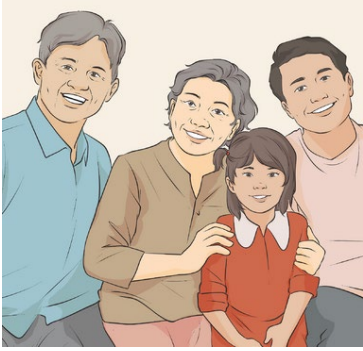


You can ask someone to help you read this factsheet. You can read our Hard Words factsheet if you need more help.



We wrote this factsheet to explain how you can make plans for the future.

Why it is good to plan for your future.



We want to stay healthy and be able to look after ourselves as we get older.



But sometimes unexpected things happen.



You might have an accident or become unwell.



This could affect your **decision-making capacity**.

What is decision-making capacity?



Decision-making capacity is when you think and make decisions about the things you do.



Like deciding how to pay your bills,



or when to visit your doctor.

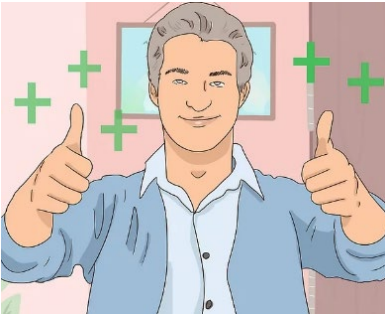


You can lose your **decision-making capacity** for lots of reasons such as having an **intellectual disability, mental illness, dementia** or an **acquired brain injury**.



If this happens you might need someone to help you make decisions.

Who would make your decisions if you no longer could?



If you plan for the future, you can think about who you would like to make decisions for you, if you lost your **decision-making capacity**.



It is important to choose someone you trust.



When you plan ahead you can choose a family member you trust.



When you plan ahead you can choose a friend you trust.



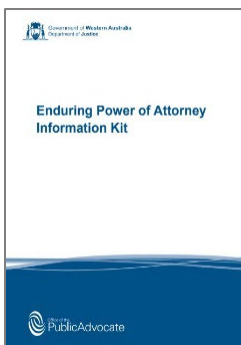
You can talk to family and friends to help you plan ahead and decide who would be the best person to choose.

What next?



There are three forms you can fill in to plan for the future.

1. An enduring power of attorney.



An **enduring power of attorney** can also be called an EPA.



An EPA is a legal form that lets you choose someone to make your **financial decisions**, if you are no longer able to.



Financial decisions are decisions about money.



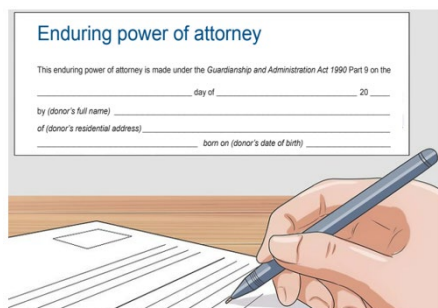
It is important to choose someone you trust to make your **financial decisions**.



You can download an EPA Kit from the OPA website.



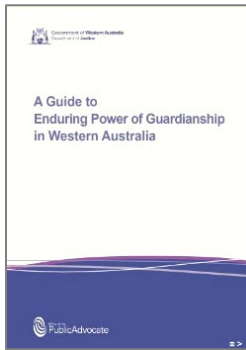
You can ask for an EPA Kit to be posted to you by calling 1300 858 455 or emailing opa@justice.wa.gov.au.



The EPA kit is free and includes the form.

There are step-by-step instructions to help you fill it out.

2. An enduring power of guardianship.



An **enduring power of guardianship** can also be called an EPG.



An EPG is a legal document that lets you choose someone to make your **lifestyle decisions**, if you are no longer able to.



Lifestyle decisions are decisions about where you live, your medicine, health and services.



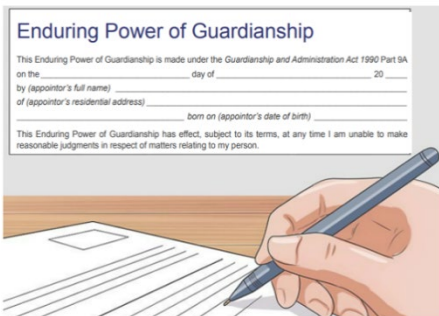
It is important to choose someone you trust to make your **lifestyle decisions**.



You can download an EPG Kit from the OPA website.



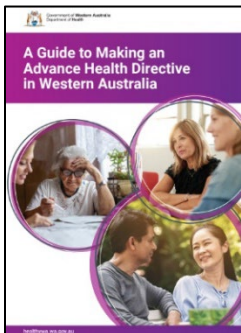
You can ask for a printed EPG Kit to be posted to you by calling 1300 858 455 or emailing opa@justice.wa.gov.au



The EPG kit is free and includes the form.

There are step-by-step instructions to help you fill it out.

3. An advance health directive.



An **advance health directive** can also be called an AHD.



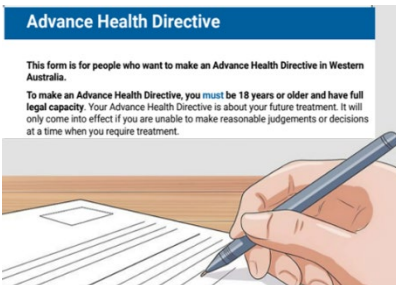
An AHD is a legal form that lets you write down what medical treatment you would like to receive if you were no longer able to make your own decisions.



You can download an AHD guide from the Healthywa website.

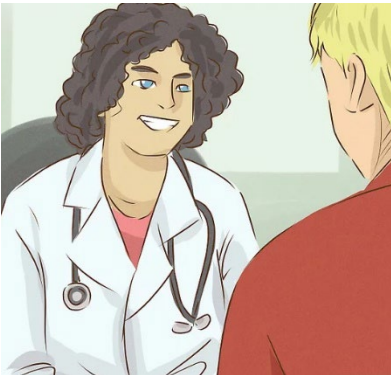


You can ask for a printed AHD guide to be posted to you by calling 9222 2300 or emailing acp@health.wa.gov.au.



The AHD guide is free and includes the form.

There are step-by-step instructions to help you fill it out.



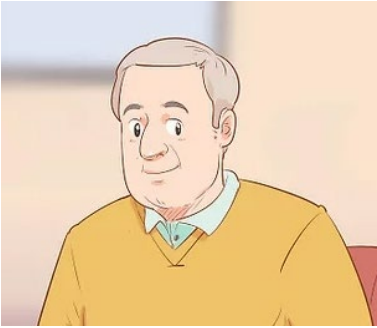
It is a good idea to talk to your doctor about making an AHD.

Other things you need to know.



It is up to you if you want to make an EPA, EPG or AHD.

It is your choice.



You do not have to make an EPA, EPG or AHD if you do not want to.



Nobody can force you to make an EPA, EPG or AHD.



An aged care facility cannot force you to make an EPA, EPG or AHD.



A friend or family member can help you make an EPA, EPG or AHD, but they cannot make it for you.



If they help you, they must do it with you and follow your instructions.

They cannot sign it for you.



You must have **decision-making capacity** to make an EPA, EPG or AHD.



You must be over 18 years old to make an EPA, EPG or AHD.



You must sign the forms properly and two people must witness your signature at the same time.



You do not need a lawyer to help you complete an EPA, EPG or AHD, unless you feel that your plans are complicated.

Contact information – Office of the Public Advocate (EPA and EPG)



The **Office of the Public Advocate** protects the rights of adults with decision-making disabilities and is appointed under the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1990* (WA).



To download EPA and EPG resources visit www.publicadvocate.wa.gov.au.



PO Box 6293, East Perth, WA 6892



For information about EPAs, EPGs and AHDs email opa@justice.wa.gov.au.



For information about EPAs, EPGs and AHDs
Contact the telephone advisory service on
1300 858 455

Contact information – Department of Health WA (AHD)



To download AHD resources visit
www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/advancehealthdirectives



For AHD resources email
acp@health.wa.gov.au.



For AHD resources call 9222 2300

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