

COMPASSION

IN DYING

SUPPORTING YOUR CHOICES AT THE END OF LIFE

FACTSHEET – Giving someone the power to make decisions for you

This is a quick guide to Lasting Powers of Attorney. Contact Compassion in Dying for more information.

INFORMATION LINE: **0800 999 2434**

What can I do?

You can appoint someone to be your **Lasting Power of Attorney for health and personal welfare**. This gives them the legal power to make decisions for you if you lose mental capacity – e.g., if you had severe dementia or were in a coma.

The person you nominate is called your **Attorney**.

Who should I appoint?

The person you choose will be able to make decisions for you in ANY situation. This can include decisions about life-sustaining treatment. If there is no one you feel you could trust with this responsibility, it may be better to make an Advance Decision.

See **FACTSHEET – Setting out your wishes out in writing (Advance Decisions)** for more information.

Helpful questions

To help you decide who to appoint, ask yourself these questions:

- Do they live near me?
- Could they be contacted in an emergency?
- Will they respect my values?
- Do they understand my wishes?
- Could they stand up for what I want, even if the doctor disagrees?

How do I make a Lasting Power of Attorney?

1. Contact the **Office of the Public Guardian** to ask for a form.
2. Speak to the person you have chosen to be your Attorney about your wishes. If you want to see how well they have understood what you want, see: **Quiz – How well do you know my wishes?**
3. Speak to your doctor. They can advise you about the kinds of medical treatment you may be given and how this will affect you. You can then decide whether or not you would want it.
4. Send the completed form back to the **Office of the Public Guardian** with the correct payment to register your Lasting Power of Attorney. This usually costs £120. Some people are eligible for reduced costs.

Your Lasting Power of Attorney is not legally binding until it is registered with the **Office of the Public Guardian**. This can take up to 13 weeks.

Your Attorney will not make decisions for you until you cannot make or communicate them yourself.

Office of the Public Guardian

Tel: 0300 456 0300

Web: www.publicguardian.gov.uk

How can we help?

- We can help you to fill the **Lasting Power of Attorney** form
- We can send you a free **Advance Decision** form and help you to fill it in
- We can send you a free **Guide to Your Rights at the End of Life**
- Call our free **Information Line** if you have any more questions about Lasting Powers of Attorney

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