

Ask yourself these questions when death is near:

- Are treatments, tests and interventions, such as intravenous therapy, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or gastric feeding, the appropriate medical decision for a person who is at the end of their life?
- Will intervening to prolong life be of benefit to your loved one?
- Will treatment prolong the dying process and reduce quality of life for your loved one?
- What would your loved one want?

“ Letting go doesn’t mean giving up but rather accepting there are things that cannot be”.

Anonymous



Some Things for Consideration:

- What would your loved one choose if they were able to make the choice?
- How can you best honour their wishes?
- Do the benefits of going to the hospital outweigh the risks of not going?
- What can reasonably be expected from medical treatment, given the current condition of your loved one?
- Can appropriate care, including pain control, be provided in the home?
- Is it more beneficial for your loved one to be cared for by the care home staff, who can offer familiarity, security and emotional comfort, than hospital staff, with whom your loved one is unfamiliar?

**For Questions,
Please speak to the Manager or Director of
Care at your home.**

You may contact the Advance Care Planning team at 306-766-5922 if you have questions about Advance Care Directives.

Developed by the Saskatoon Long Term Care Advisory Council

Deciding Whether to Hospitalize Your Loved One



This brochure was developed by family members for family members



Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan

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Photos provided by Saskatoon Long Term Care Advisory Council

The intent of this brochure is to help inform family members who find themselves faced with the difficult task of having to make decisions on behalf of their loved one.

Individuals living in Long Term Care homes have the right to make choices about receiving the right care, in the right place, at the right time. They may document their wishes in an Advance Care Directive or appoint a proxy or Personal Power of Attorney should there be a time when they become incapable of expressing their wishes for themselves. An Advance Care Directive comes into effect legally when individuals are no longer able to speak for themselves and wishes must be honored by family.

Is your loved one living in a Long Term Care or personal care home and struggling with health issues? If so, you may be trying to decide whether your loved one should go to the hospital for treatment.

There are times when hospitalization is warranted and necessary. Generally, hospitalization should be reserved for residents who can no longer have their comfort needs and treatment goals met in the home but could have these needs met in the hospital. The physician and nursing staff at the home can make an assessment and help guide your decision.

You may be thinking that hospitalization is necessary for your loved one. In making your decision, it is important to ensure that the benefits of going to the hospital outweigh the associated risks that come with hospitalization:

- There may be wait times for assessment and treatment and this may add to the discomfort of your loved one.
- Diagnostic testing may be burdensome and painful, especially if your loved one has already decided not to seek treatment for any diseases the tests might reveal.
- Increased risk of contracting a hospital acquired infection.
- Increased risk of hospital-induced delirium.
- Increased anxiety, responsive behaviours and confusion, especially if your loved one suffers from cognitive impairment.
- Possibility of reduced function on return to the home.



What will help you in making your decision whether to hospitalize your loved one?

- Determine what services/treatments/medications/equipment are available at the home to meet your loved one's current needs (e.g. lab services, intravenous therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, oxygen, palliative care outreach program, dietitian, speech language pathology, paramedics, physician/ nurse practitioner availability).
- Determine what your loved one would want by reviewing their Advance Care Directive.