



## Advance Care Planning is a Gift to You and Your Family

Sudden illness or accident can happen to anyone at any time. Preparing in advance minimizes conflict and uncertainty about decisions that may arise. Talk to your family, friends and health care providers about what matters most to you.



An advance care planning initiative by  
Vermont Ethics Network. For more information,  
contact us at:

**802.828.2909**  
**[www.TakingStepsVT.org](http://www.TakingStepsVT.org)**

OVERVIEW

**TAKING  
STEPS  
VERMONT**

## Who's Your Person...

## What's Your Plan?

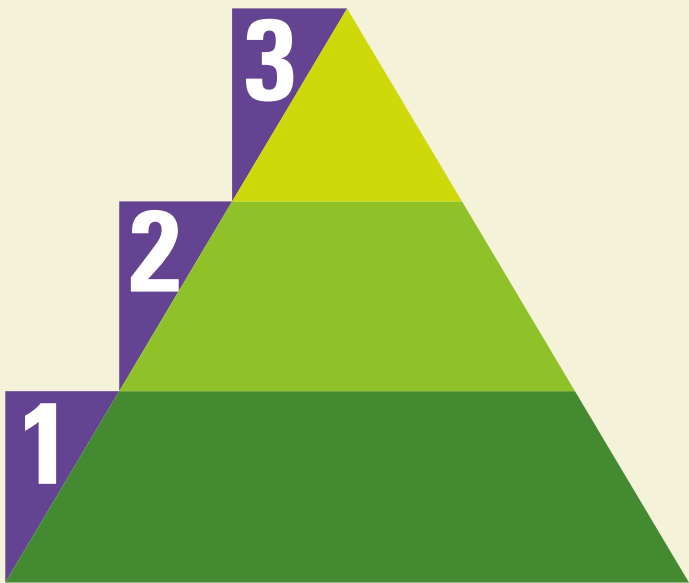
**A stepwise approach  
to advance care planning**

VERMONT  
ETHICS  
NETWORK

— Advancing —  
Health Care Ethics

# Advance Care Planning

Advance Care Planning is a process to help a person, in advance of critical illness, think about and plan for future medical decisions at a time when they are unable to speak for themselves.



## WHO needs to do advance care planning?

Anyone over the age of 18 who is capable of making their own decisions.

## WHY is advance care planning important?

It provides an opportunity to:

- ▲ Think about what matters most—goals, hopes, fears and tradeoffs.
- ▲ Appoint a decision-maker to speak on your behalf.
- ▲ Communicate the kind of treatment you would or would not want if seriously ill or injured.

# Start *Taking Steps* Today!

## STEP 1: WHO'S YOUR PERSON?

*For adults 18 years of age or older*

Complete an **advance directive** to appoint a **Health Care Agent**, also known as a health care proxy or power of attorney for health care, to make medical decisions if you are unable to speak for yourself.

## STEP 2: WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

*For adults with chronic illness or those seeking to give more specific information about their values and healthcare preferences*

Complete an **advance directive** with detailed information about your **health care goals and treatment priorities** to provide guidance for your family, friends and health care providers in times of critical illness or serious injury.

## STEP 3: ARE THERE LIMITS?

*For individuals who are seriously ill or dying, or who are certain they would not want life-prolonging interventions*

Consider talking with your clinician about **Medical Orders** to limit the use of life-sustaining treatment at the end-of-life.