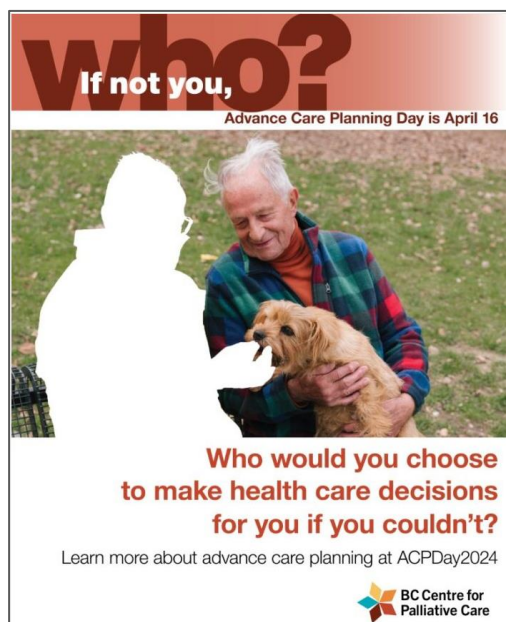


The Best Gift

for you, your family, and
friends, your healthcare
providers



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Making the time to think and talk about your values and wishes for your future health and personal care with the people who matter most may just be the best gift you could give your loved ones.

As a registered nurse with BC Cancer Agency in northern British Columbia, Kelsey Listoen has seen the benefits and the consequences when Advance Care Planning (ACP) has been in place and when it has not. The breadth of her experiences inspires her to have difficult end-of-life conversations with family members.

"I worked with an elderly patient who was unable to communicate effectively," Kelsey says. "Her family was unable to understand the value of the cancer treatment we were providing for her. It was devastating for them – and for us as healthcare providers – not knowing for sure that the woman would have consented to the treatment if she understood the gravity of the situation." This traumatic ordeal led to many distressing weeks and a great deal of confusion. If the patient had shared their wishes for her care with her family, it could - or would - have made the patient's last days much more peaceful and reassuring for all. Discussions about whether 'proposed treatments' align or do not align with a patient's goals are critical.

Kelsey has seen the benefits of ACP in another situation, where a woman was able to spend almost all her last days at home with her children, instead of in the hospital – according to her wishes. "She lived four months longer than we expected and we were able to honor her wishes to spend that time with her children at home," says Kelsey. "It was important to her that she show her children that she was a fighter and that she was willing to undergo any and all possible medical treatment until the very end."

A healthcare team member like Kelsey needs to know that a patient understands where they are at in their end-of-life journey and understands what is important to them during this time. **Healthcare providers can honor patients' wishes and offer a more fulfilling, peaceful end-of-life experience when clear advance care plans are in place.** In fact, medical teams truly appreciate hearing about a patient's vision and decisions. Why leave it to chance?

Advance Care Planning is a gift for everyone! Determine what matters most to you so that your family will know what kind of care you want, or don't want. It helps reduce family confusion and disputes and gives your healthcare provider team necessary information to determine care treatments that align with your wishes, beliefs, and values.

It's never too early to talk about tomorrow. Start today!

