

EMERGENCY AND FUTURE PLANNING

OFFICE HOURS
MONDAY TO FRIDAY
09:00 – 17:00

CONTACT DETAILS

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www.tuvida.org

Approaching Difficult Conversations

There is never a good time to approach the subject of the future with your family, be it what you want to happen for yourself or the person you care for, if the caring role becomes unsustainable.

Ultimately, it may be that you will be discussing your death. It is important that your extended family are aware of your wishes, so that if the unexpected happens, they know what to do and what you would want them to do. Putting off these discussions can cause a lot of uncertainty both for you and your family so it's good to talk about such things when you feel the time is right. Usually during conversation an opportunity will present itself – take it.

We often find that family members are waiting for direction from you and don't want to offend you by bringing it up first. It's better to have several low key conversations whilst you're physically and emotionally able to give rational and considered thought to the details. When someone is unwell or in a crisis situation, things get rushed and mistakes can happen which can have a devastating effect on all concerned.

It may be useful to involve advocacy services if you need help getting your thoughts across. Advocacy services help people – particularly those who are most vulnerable where people do not have full capacity or transient capacity to:

- Access information and services
- Be involved in decisions about their lives
- Explore choices and options
- Defend and promote their rights and responsibilities
- Speak out about issues that matter to them



Prepare for the conversations by making notes. Family members should be able to ask questions or make suggestions in a relaxed manner. Ultimately, everyone will benefit from this process.

Emergency Contacts



An emergency contact ideally needs to be someone close by who can get to you quickly in an emergency, it could be a:

- Family member
- Friend
- Neighbour

Before nominating someone, you must discuss it with them and they should be comfortable about undertaking the role. Some people may be happy to take on a full caring role for a few hours or even a couple of days whilst other arrangements are made, whilst another person may wish to be the person who makes the phone calls to the Social Work team or next of kin.

Your emergency contacts must be aware of who to contact if something happens. You need to give clear instructions about where important phone numbers can be found, who they need to contact in an emergency and have the out-of-hours number for the Social Work team available. (Ensure details are kept up to date). To save time in an emergency, it would be useful to have a specific telephone sheet with the relevant numbers on which can be kept near your phone, with a copy given to your emergency contact.

Spare key arrangements

A wall key safe is by far the best option providing the code is known to your emergency contact. They are easy to fit and relatively low cost. They have either a roll barrel combination lock or a touch pad code access. If your emergency contact would be willing to hold a spare key, that would be useful too. Hiding keys in outdoor areas is not recommended as you are leaving yourself vulnerable and potentially open to harm.

ICE Contacts

You can set up ICE contacts (In Case of Emergency) by adding the letters 'ICE' directly in front of a person's name in your phone or address book to assist first responders with finding your emergency contact person's details.

Essential Information

Herbert Protocol



The Herbert Protocol is a form which is kept at home, or in a safe place, with important information about a vulnerable person. Should they go missing, information is easily on hand about routines, medical requirements and favourite places to visit. This can be handed over to the police, which means you don't have the worry of collecting the information during a stressful time. For more information and to download the form, visit <https://www.westmercia.police.uk/>

Message in a Bottle

Lions Clubs 'Message in a Bottle' scheme is a simple but effective way for people to keep their basic personal and medical details where they can be found in an emergency – the fridge. Everyone has a fridge and it's a consistent safe place to keep it where it will be found easily. There are two green cross stickers in the canister, one is placed on the door or door frame of your MAIN access door. The other is placed on the outside of the fridge door.



Message in a Bottle helps emergency services personnel to save valuable time in identifying an individual quickly and knowing if they have allergies or take special medication.

The paramedic arrives at your house, sees the sticker on your door and goes to your fridge to retrieve your information, saving precious time in delivering the necessary care and attention. These canisters will hold more than one form or you can have a one for every person in the household, in which case it would be useful to include a photo of the person, as it may be confusing to identify who's who just by a description.

Bottles are available for FREE in your local pharmacy, GP surgery or online via <https://lionsmessageinabottle.co.uk/>

'This is me' booklet

'This is me' is a booklet that you can use to provide details about you for use by others. It provides an easy and practical way of recording who you are.

The form includes space to include information on your cultural and family background; events, people and places from your life; preferences, routines and your personality.

Essential Information It is suitable for use in any setting – at home, in hospital, in respite care or a care home and provides a valuable way of letting medical and social care staff know more about you, should you be unable to tell them yourself.
[Download the form here.](#)

Life Book

You can obtain specific formats from AGE UK, or MENCAP, or you can make your own in the form of a scrapbook. The life book from AGE UK is a free booklet where you can write important and useful information about your life, from who insures your car to where you put the TV licence.

[You can download the form here.](#)

Alternatively, you can order a free printed version by calling the Age UK Advice Line on 0800 678 1602.

Pets

Any change in circumstances can have an effect on family pets. In extreme cases emergency respite may be needed for them too. If the animal has to go into a boarding facility, they have to be fully vaccinated if the facility requires it, particularly for cats and dogs, against Parvo Virus, Kennel Cough and Cat Flu.

Emergency plans have to include arrangements for any pets you may have. Things to think about include:

- Is there someone who could look after them if you don't have a preferred boarding facility?
- Do they know where food is kept, what they have, how often are they fed?
- Where are collars and leads kept?
- What are their sleeping / exercise arrangements?
- Are they on any medication, where is it kept, what are the vets contact details?
- Does your pet have any unusual traits/likes/dislikes?

Some unpaid carers live on remote smallholdings or even farms who have a variety of animals. All aspects of their care have to be considered when formulating a care plan. If you have exotic animals which need specialist attention, then even greater consideration is needed. Not everyone may be comfortable looking after snakes, lizards and spiders etc. A specialist in this field may need to be involved in formulating the care plan.



Getting Your Affairs in Order

Thinking about the future is difficult at the best of times, but it's better to tackle these issues when you are well physically and emotionally, rather than when things aren't going too well or if you're already in crisis.

Wills: Why you shouldn't die without a will When you die without leaving a will, the law decides who gets what and how much. It doesn't matter what your relationship with those people was like when you were alive.

By leaving a will that says clearly who should get your property and money when you die, you can prevent unnecessary distress at an already difficult time for your family and friends.

Lasting Power of Attorney

A lasting power of attorney (LPA) is a way of giving someone you trust the legal authority to make decisions on your behalf if you lack mental capacity at some time in the future, or no longer wish to make decisions for yourself.

Anyone who is aged 18 or older, who has the mental ability to make decisions for themselves, can arrange for someone else to make these decisions for them in the future. This legal authority is called "power of attorney".

The person who is given power of attorney is known as the "attorney" and must be over 18 years old. The person who is giving the power of attorney is known as the "donor".

There are two types of LPA:

1) LPA for financial decisions

This can be used while someone still has mental capacity or you can state in your LPA application that you only want it to come into force if you lose capacity. You can restrict the types of decision your attorney can make, or let them make all financial decisions on your behalf. An attorney (the person who makes decisions for you) can generally make decisions on things such as:

- Buying and selling property;
- Paying the mortgage;
- Investing money;
- Paying bills

2) LPA for health and care decisions

This covers decisions about healthcare as well as personal welfare and can only be used if and when you lose mental capacity. An attorney can generally make decisions about things such as:

- Where you should live;
- Your medical care;
- What you should eat;
- Who you should have contact with;
- What kind of social activities you should take part in.

Please note, if you do not have LPA for finance and property and you have a joint bank account, if the person loses capacity, the other person must inform the bank as it's a breach of their account details if they continue to use it as the other person hasn't given consent.

How do I appoint a Power of Attorney?

As a donor, to give power of attorney you should understand exactly what powers you are giving to someone else. GOV.UK has information to help you understand what an LPA means for you and the person you appoint to make decisions for you. You can make a power of attorney online.

[You can download the forms here.](#)

You can also see a solicitor to assist you with appointing one.

Funeral Planning

Many people now consider pre-pay funeral plans which are available from any Funeral Director and are protected by a governing body should the company cease trading.

With a funeral plan the cost is fixed, you can make changes to it before or at the time of the funeral but that could incur additional costs.

Having a pre-pay plan also relieves next of kin of the responsibility of arranging the funeral whilst mourning your loss. You are also assured of getting the funeral you want by making the arrangements ahead of time.

People on low incomes can apply to the government's Social Fund Funeral Payment to help meet the cost of a funeral. There are many types of funerals which don't necessarily follow a religious format, and others that have an ECO value. You don't have to use a Funeral Director. You can organise everything providing you follow the initial legal process of registering the death and getting a death certificate.

The Department of Works & Pensions (DWP) have a booklet called "What to do after a death in England & Wales" which will guide you through the process. It can be downloaded from the [DWP website here](#).