

20 March 2026

In an uncertain world, you CAN have certainty about your healthcare decisions

National Advance Care Planning Week (16-22 March 2026)



In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes... and the opportunity to have your healthcare wishes known.

President of the Rural Doctors of Australia (RDAA), Dr Sarach Chalmers, said no matter your age it's sensible to talk with your doctor about setting up an Advance Care Plan.

"If there is one thing that the past five years has shown us is that there is no certainty about how the world, or our lives, will pan out," Dr Chalmers said.

"Advance Care Plans ensure a seriously ill patient's care wishes are taken into account if they can't communicate on their own behalf.



"None of us want to think about ending up in a situation where we can't communicate our care preferences, but it can happen to anyone, at any age. So just like making a Will, having an Advance Care Plan is important.

"While it definitely comes to mind when someone is ageing, or suffering an advanced chronic, or life-limiting illness, it can also happen due to an accident, a stroke or heart attack, or dementia.

"So regardless of your age, and particularly if you have strong feelings about the kind of care you would like to receive, an Advance Care Plan will make sure your wishes are clear to everyone involved in your care," Dr Chalmers said.

"Each state has different requirements for setting up and formalising Advance Care Plans, so it is important to talk with your doctor about the requirements for your particular state.

"Make National Advance Care Planning Week the week to start a discussion with your family and doctor about an Advance Care Plan, or to revisit your previous plan as things may have changed for you since then."

Resources:

- [Advance Care Planning Australia](#) provides excellent information on Advance Care Planning (including a state-by-state guide)

- National Advance Care Planning Support Service™ on 1300 208 582 or email acpa@advancecareplanning.org.au for guidance on setting up an Advance Care Plan
 - Find additional information and links on the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care's [Advance Care Planning webpage](#).
-

Download:

[Photo of Dr Sarah Chalmers](#)

Available for interview:

RDAA President, Dr Sarah Chalmers

Media contacts:

Ineke Kuiper on 0408 669 638

Patrick Daley on 0408 004 890