



# Treatment Escalation Plans

Making the right decisions when  
you are ill in hospital.

**Information for people over the age of 18  
receiving healthcare, their families and carers.**

## What is a Treatment Escalation Plan (TEP)?

A Treatment Escalation Plan (TEP) is a form that the health care team use to record a person's individual care plan should they become very unwell, deteriorate or if there is an emergency in their condition. The TEP will focus on which treatments and care may or may not be most helpful to them. This plan will be used to guide the health care team who are caring for you while you are in hospital.



## Why is it important for me to have a TEP?

To provide good care for you, the health care team looking after you needs to consider the types of treatments that may be of benefit to you while you are in hospital. The types of treatment and how best to manage your condition will be recorded on the TEP. In summary:

- The information recorded on the TEP form helps to guide healthcare professionals when you are very unwell or in an emergency, as to which treatments would or would not help you.
- A TEP encourages you and your clinical team to discuss certain aspects of emergency treatment in advance, making sure that the right decisions are made and included in your TEP.
- A TEP means that you do not receive treatments that you wouldn't want.

## What sort of treatment is included in a TEP?

The TEP can be written to include a range of treatments to consider for you, such as:

- Whether you should be admitted to another hospital
- Whether you should be admitted to the intensive care unit
- Whether you should be put on a breathing machine
- Whether you may need kidney dialysis
- Whether you should have medication or fluid administration through a vein
- Whether you should receive cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

Some of these interventions may not help you. All treatment and care options will be discussed with you and those closest to you.

## Will I be involved in the discussion?

**Yes.** Discussing and completing a TEP form as soon as possible when you are admitted to hospital is important. It provides the opportunity for doctors and the wider health care team caring for you to discuss and decide with you and those close to you what treatment and care should be provided if you become more unwell.

If the clinical team believe that that you are unlikely to get better, they will speak to you and those closest to you. This is important to decide what care and treatment would best help you and what your wishes are.

## Can my family, carers or those closest to me be involved in the TEP discussion?

**Yes.** You may wish to have your family, carers or those closest to you with you to discuss the options available and agree to the decision, either in person or through a telephone or video call. This will be with your consent. After the discussion, the doctor will complete the TEP form, and it will be placed in the front of your medical notes so that anyone involved in your care can easily see it at any time.

## Who decides what treatment options are best for me?

The most senior doctor responsible for your care along with their clinical team, will have the overall responsibility for deciding what treatment and care should take place if your condition worsens. It may be that there are treatments that will clearly not help your condition. These will be discussed with you and those closest to you and the reasons why a treatment may not work will be explained fully.

There might be treatments where it is unclear if they would help, and treatments that could potentially worsen your longer-term quality of life. Your views and wishes are essential when deciding on these treatment options.

Other treatments may clearly be helpful to you, but you may find them unacceptable, and your choice will be respected. The healthcare team will always talk to you about your TEP.



## What if I don't want to talk about any of this?

You may not want to be involved in such discussions. Your decision about being involved or not will always be respected. In this case, the team will ask for your permission to discuss treatment options with your loved ones.

## What if I can't participate in or understand the discussion?

In these cases, a best interest assessment will be completed by the clinical team. A best interest meeting will be held if you lack mental capacity to decide for yourself and need others to make those decisions on your behalf. In these cases, all attempts will be made to include your family, carers or those closest to you in the discussion.

However, when there is an emergency, there may not be time to hold a meeting. The healthcare team will consider all treatment options in your best interest and will do everything they can to keep those closest to you updated.

## What if I am too unwell to discuss my treatment?

Healthcare professionals are trained to do everything they can to help you understand decisions around your treatment and care. Sometimes people are too unwell to take part in the discussion. You may have already made decisions regarding your future healthcare and may have written a Future Care Plan, Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment or you may have appointed a Lasting Power of Attorney for your health and welfare.

Where there are no recorded decisions or other advance directions, the healthcare team will have to decide on treatment options in discussion with your family members, carers and those closest to you to gain as much information as possible about your previous views.

## Can my TEP change?

**Yes.** The TEP is only used as guidance for care and treatments that you will have and can be changed as your condition changes. You, or those closest to you, should let a member of the healthcare team know if you wish to discuss your TEP.

## What if I disagree with the TEP?

By explaining treatment options and involving people and their families in discussions, disagreements about TEPs are very rare. In this country, an adult can refuse treatment, and this must be respected by the healthcare team, even if they disagree.

However, you, your relatives or those closest to you cannot demand treatment if the clinical team believes it to be harmful or not beneficial to you. For example, you or those closest to you cannot demand a surgeon to perform an operation if the surgeon believes it would not help you. There may be situations where the healthcare team do not offer treatment because they feel that the treatment would do more harm than good.

If you, your relative or those closest to you do not agree with the TEP decision, it is important to tell the clinical team. They will then discuss your condition and treatment with a bigger multi-disciplinary team of professionals to get more views. If there is still disagreement with regards to the TEP, an independent second consultant opinion will be offered.



## How long does my TEP stay in place?

The TEP only applies to your current stay in hospital. If you are discharged from hospital and re-admitted in the future, your condition will be reviewed and discussed with you and a new TEP will be completed.

## Who should I tell that I have a TEP?

As well as discussing this with your family and those closest to you, you may also want to talk to other people about the decisions made in relation to your care and treatment including:

- Friends and carers
- GPs
- Any support groups you may be involved in
- Any Spiritual advisors
- Advocates who may be involved in helping you make decisions.





## What if I have more questions?

It is important that you, your relatives and those closest to you have time to consider what you have been told and ask questions about anything that is not clear. The clinical team looking after you will be available to discuss any concerns with you and those close to you. Please let the healthcare team know if there are any further questions.

If you have any queries or concerns that cannot be resolved by the clinical team, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service who may be able to help you resolve your concerns.

## Contact us

### Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

Tel: 01633 493753

Email: [ABB.PALS@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:ABB.PALS@wales.nhs.uk)

If you believe that your concerns have not been addressed and you want to raise a formal complaint, please contact the “Putting Things Right” team:

### Putting Things Right (PTR) Concerns Team

Tel: (01633) 431666

Email: [ABB.PuttingThingsRight@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:ABB.PuttingThingsRight@wales.nhs.uk)

If you would like an **independent advocate** to help you raise a concern, you are able to contact Llais (Citizen Voice Body) for support.

**Telephone:** 01633 838516

**Email:** [gwentadvocacy@llaiscymru.org](mailto:gwentadvocacy@llaiscymru.org)

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