

Your healthcare team will ask you about your goals of care.

A goal is about a treatment outcome, like lowering your blood pressure, healing an injury or walking without pain. A goal of care is what you want to achieve through care or treatment – the things you want to be able to do, like being able to walk up steps, attend a wedding, do some gardening or go on a trip.

It is important that the healthcare team understands your goals, as it helps them understand what is important to you. It is also important to talk about your goals, as sometimes they might be different to your healthcare team's goals.

The following are some tips about setting goals, and examples of things you can do to make sure that everyone in the healthcare team knows what is important to you, and what your goals are.

Tip 1: Think about what is important to you and share it with your healthcare team

Write a list or discuss what is important to you with your family, carers and other support people including things like your needs and preferences for your care, the outcomes that matter most to you and what you expect from your care.

Thinking about this beforehand can help you to talk about what is important to you with your healthcare team.

When your healthcare team ask you about your goals of care you can ask for:

- Time to think about and discuss your goals
- A quiet or private place to talk about your goals
- More than one conversation about your goals.

Tip 2: Share decisions about care and treatment choices with your healthcare team

You will be provided with information about your condition and the different care and treatment options available to you, including information about risks, benefits, side effects, waiting times and costs to you.

Discuss the different care options and how they fit with your needs, preferences and goals with your healthcare team. Ask questions if you need more information, and be involved in decision making as much as you want to be.

Tip 3: Identify multiple goals of care that are positive and achievable, yet challenging

If you have more than one goal, you may need to work with your healthcare team to decide which one you should work towards first. You might need to break down larger or longer term goals into smaller steps and work with your healthcare provider to set some timeframes for achieving each step.

Set goals that are a little bit challenging, but which won't leave you feeling that they are not achievable. Goals should be about what you want to achieve, and not just about what you want to avoid.

Tip 4: Understand who will be involved in your care and their roles in helping you reach your goals of care

Talk to your health care team about who you want to have involved in your care, and how they will work with you towards your goals.

Tip 5: Be able to access a record of your agreed goals of care, and share it with others if you choose

You may find it helpful to keep a record of your agreed goals of care. Your healthcare team should provide information about your goals to the people you want involved in your care. It should be also written in your record about your care.

Tip 6: Keep track of your progress towards your goals of care and if they have been met

Together with your healthcare team, monitor progress towards your goals and discuss what is working well or what could be improved, so that changes can be made if needed.

Tip 7: Remember that your goals can change

You may need to have more than one conversation with your healthcare team about your goals. This might be because your condition changes, your treatment isn't working as expected, or you decide a different goal is more important to you.

Questions?

For more information, please visit: safetyandquality.gov.au/comprehensive-care

