

## Awareness and Attitudes of Community-Dwelling Individuals in Singapore towards Participating in Advance Care Planning

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Advance care planning (ACP) is an important aspect of end-of-life care that has been shown to improve patient autonomy in decision-making and reduce stress for surviving family members. Given the rapidly ageing population in Singapore, a greater emphasis on end-of-life care planning is needed. This study therefore sought to examine the awareness and attitudes of the general Singaporean community towards participating in ACP, which are not known hitherto. **Materials and Methods:** A 24-item interviewer-administered questionnaire was constructed and administered via door-to-door survey amongst community-dwelling residents living in Housing and Development Board (HDB) flats across Singapore, selected via a two-stage stratified random sampling. **Results:** Of the 406 completed surveys, 14.4% of respondents had heard of ACP (n = 58), mostly through the media (67.9%), from family and friends (21.4%) and healthcare providers (21.4%). Only 26.8% of those who had previously heard of ACP knew how to begin an ACP discussion and 12.5% of them had a prior ACP discussion. After education, the majority of respondents were willing to begin an ACP discussion (n = 236, 60.1%). Being of an older age, having a life threatening illness, and having more knowledge about ACP were significant factors associated with willingness to have an ACP discussion. Barriers included perceiving oneself as still healthy and preferring the family to make decisions instead. **Conclusion:** There is a low awareness but high expressed willingness to engage in an ACP discussion amongst the Singaporean community. More efforts are needed to educate the public about ACP, engage the family unit and correct the present misconceptions.

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