

## Today's Choice, Future's Voice: Decide End-Of-Life Care Plans in Advance

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### **Abstract:**

**Introduction:** Having a dignified end-of-life is a human right. However, elderly people with a terminal illness, such as cancer and severe dementia, are often unable to express their will. They may involuntarily receive futile life-sustaining treatments leading to unnecessary suffering.

Medical futility raises many problems. It prolongs patients' painful dying process, exhausts families with considerable expenses and time, causes healthcare providers moral distress, and consumes substantial medical resources. It has been a serious issue in Taiwan, where people tend to avoid talking about death when they're alive. The prevalence of prolonged ventilation here is 5.8 times that of in the U.S., and nearly 30% of national healthcare expenditures occur during the last 3~6 months of life.

To solve the problem, the Patient Right to Autonomy Act was implemented in 2019. Adults can complete Advance Directive (AD) to refuse or accept certain treatments in specific conditions. However, many citizens are still unfamiliar with AD. Some even misunderstand it as euthanasia.

**Objectives:** The poster aims to encourage people to consider and complete ADs in advance, which may be the voice to state one's choices in the future. By planning earlier, it'll not only help individuals receive patient-centered cares but benefit society by minimizing medical futility.