## Peter's journey

Peter is 80 years old and has moved to a retirement village unit after the death of his wife. It was a difficult transition to move from their home of 50 years. Peter is supported by his family, especially his daughter who lives on the Gold Coast. He is a long-standing member of the local Lions Club and the golf club and continues to enjoy an active life. Peter's daughter supports him to arrange for some paid weekly cleaning. He visits and dines with friends and family and loves looking after his youngest grandchild every Thursday. He regularly attends the general practitioner (GP) he and his wife have used for the last twenty years.

Family: Even though his daughter is the EPA for health and personal matters, she involves her father in making decisions as much as possible. Her brother in Melbourne holds the EPA for financial matters. He sometimes becomes impatient with the time taken to make decisions relating to Peter's care and support



Family: Peter and his wife had completed their Advanced Health Directive (AHD) and Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA) years ago through the advice of their youngest son. Peter's daughter and eldest son are the EPAs and contract an aged care broker to facilitate access to a suitable residential aged care facility (RACF) close to Peter's original home and community.



Peter: Six months after entering the retirement village. Peter suffers a severe stroke and is hospitalised. As a result, Peter suffers significant cognitive impairment and partial paralysis. He is assessed as no longer having capacity to make his own legal, financial or healthcare decisions. The retirement village is no longer appropriate for his care needs.

## **Kev Themes:**

- Knowledge on aged care and advance care planning leads to timely access to support and appropriate decision making

active and social 80

year old

- Staffing numbers and skill levels (clinical and social) in RACF can make a significant impact to care on a daily basis as well as during an emergency
- RACF staff require adequate training and support to understand the ageing process and the impact of loss, disability and grief
- Limited access to mental health specialist services and advice for RACF staff
- Having advocates in both the RACF and hospital setting makes a significant difference in effectively assessing a person's condition and developing a comprehensive

Peters daughter feels

frustrated towards

RACF staff

**Daughter:** Peter's daughter becomes concerned with his rapid decline and approaches RACF staff. She is frustrated with the response and gets the impression that no one is particularly concerned. She has not been able to get to know any of the staff very well and feels frustrated that she has no one to

consult with over his condition.



CONDITION

**DETERIORATES** 

**GP:** Peter's GP continues

to attend to Peter in the

RACF. This is reassuring

for Peter and always the

daughter when she visits.

four months after Peter's

entry to the RACF, and no

other GPs make regular

visits to the facility.

first thing he reports to his

Unfortunately, this GP retires



Advanced Care

Planning leads to

timely and appropriate

decision making

Peter: Peter moves into an RACF with high care facilities. His daughter visits regularly and one of his sons visits at Easter. Friends and club associates visit Peter regularly at first but that drops off as their own situations change. One young fellow from the Rotary Club continues to stay in close contact.



**Son:** Peter's son in Sydney is informed about his father's decline by his sister, and her frustration that she felt his situation was not being taken as seriously as it should. The son phones management and is not as 'diplomatic' as his sister has been; informing them of his links with lawyers and his knowledge of media stories about what happens in RACFs.



## PETER IS **ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL**

Peter: When Peter awakes in a strange setting, he is terrified. His daughter was notified and has been staying by his side this whole time Peter's FPA and AHD had been previously uploaded to My Health Record. This allowed a smooth approach for communication and decision making.



Hospital Staff: Staff have supported Peter's daughter to be as comfortable as possible as she kept vigil over her father. She was able to tell staff about some of her father's colourful and active past and his love of football and horse racing. A television is arranged, and the sports channel activated.

Peter received comprehensive mental health assessment



Specialist: Following the additional information provided by Peter's daughter, the specialist mental health team is called in. Their assessment of Peter's depression contributes to a more comprehensive assessment of his overall condition and a treatment plan is prepared.

**Daughter:** Peter's daughter stays with him almost 24/7. She has built relationships with the treating doctors and plays a Key role in a family meeting when the consultant is available. She ensures the treating team have his previous medical records and informs them of the significant changes which have occurred for her father, starting with the loss of his wife.

