

PRESS RELEASE

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Immediate Release

PUBLIC MEETING ON FEBRUARY 27TH TO DISCUSS DRAFT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR ADVANCE HEALTHCARE DIRECTIVES

The Forum on End of Life in Ireland – an initiative of the Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF) – has announced today (18th Feb) that it will hold a public meeting next week on the Department of Health’s recently published draft legislation to provide for Advance Healthcare Directives.

The free event will take place on **Thursday, February 27th at the Alexander Hotel** in Dublin city centre from 6pm and all are welcome to attend.

Chaired by the IHF’s CEO Sharon Foley, the confirmed speakers on the evening will include Dr Liam Twomey, GP and Fine Gael TD who previously introduced a Private Members Bill on Advance Healthcare Directives; Patricia Rickard-Clarke, Solicitor and former Law Reform Commissioner; Dr Brendan O’Shea, GP and Lecturer in Trinity College Dublin and Dr Siobhán O’Sullivan, Chief Bioethics Officer in the Department of Health.

Since the publication of the Draft General Scheme for Advance Healthcare Directives earlier this month, the IHF and Forum on End of Life have been considering the draft legislation and have encouraged the public to be part of the national consultation process which ends on March 7th.

Mrs Justice Catherine McGuinness, Chair of the National Council of the Forum on End of Life in Ireland, stated: “This draft legislation is a vital step in the development of patient-centred care at the end-of-life. The introduction of a legal framework to cover Advance Healthcare Directives will bring clarity for healthcare professionals as well as families on rights and responsibilities. We are organising this public meeting to inform people of the Government’s proposal and to hear some expert opinions.”

The National Council of the Forum on End of Life in Ireland has developed an advance planning tool called *Think Ahead* which guides people in looking at and recording all aspects of end-of-life. It covers legal, economic, healthcare preferences, wishes for organ donation and funeral arrangements. It also provides for an Advance Healthcare Directive.

-ENDS-

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