5 WAYS TO PROMOTE ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

The devastation wreaked on families by the fast-moving COVID-19 has shown us how vital conversations about patients’ end-of-life care wishes can be before the onset of serious illness. Unfortunately, only 27% of Americans have formally documented their wishes.

What can you do to help encourage advance care planning (ACP)? On Wednesday, September 23, 2020, three renowned speakers shared their recommendations: Patricia Bomba, MD, MACP, Vice President & Medical Director of Geriatrics for Excellus BlueCross BlueShield; Martha Sullivan, DSW, MA, Executive Director of Creedmoor Psychiatric Center; and Brittany Chambers, MPH, MCHES®, Associate Director of Education at the Center to Advance Palliative Care. To view the program recording, copies of speaker presentations and a complete list of resources, click here.

1. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONVERSATION

Identify opportunities to open the conversation around end-of-life care wishes. Make sure you have the tools and information you need before you begin, document the plan, store it in an easily accessible location such as a secure online location, and revise as needed.

Resources: CompassionAndSupport.org and Conversation Starters from John A. Hartford Foundation

2. BUILD TRUST & LEVERAGE EXISTING NETWORKS /LEADERS

Non-clinical contacts can often help bridge the gap between community members and healthcare providers/systems. Leverage positive relationships communities have with their religious and community leaders to encourage open and culturally appropriate conversation on end-of-life plans.

Resources: Community Partners in Advance Care Planning

3. ENHANCE YOUR COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES, TOOLS & TRAINING

Good communication is critical to building trusted relationships, holding essential end-of-life conversations, and ensuring patients’ wishes are heard and documented appropriately.

Resources: COVID Ready Communications Playbook from VitalTalk

4. DEVELOP PATIENT ACTION PLANS

Provide forms to complete together and revisit them often — this is not a “one and done” process.

Resources: Advance Directive Forms by U.S. State and Advance Directives Information from Compassion and Support

5. ADVOCATE FOR POLICY CHANGES IN THE ADVANCE CARE PLANNING PROCESS

Read about advocacy efforts that the Coalition to Transform Advanced Care (C-TAC) is taking and learn how you can become involved in their work.

This event was sponsored by NYAM’s Center for Healthy Aging and Fellows Section on Healthy Aging.