



Documenting Conversations about Advance Care Planning

Why is advance care planning important?

Advance care planning helps to ensure that family, friends and caregivers are all familiar with a resident's wishes about the care they wish to receive, especially related to end of life care. Because each resident will have different preferences based on personal values and beliefs, it's important for caregivers to know as much as possible about their wishes before important decisions need to be made.

The Campaign goal is "Following admission and prior to completing or updating the plan of care, all nursing home residents will have the opportunity to discuss their goals for care, including their preferences for advance care planning, with an appropriate member of the healthcare team. Those preferences should be recorded in their medical record and used in the development of their plan of care."

How nursing assistants can help residents participate in advance care planning:

- Learn about advance care planning documents specific to your state (i.e., living wills, medical powers of attorney, documents for those who are cognitively impaired, and others).
- Learn who in your nursing home can help residents with advance care planning and refer questions to that person.
- Recognize that not all residents and families will want to talk about advance care planning.
- Listen to residents when they want to talk about end of life care, and report these conversations to the charge nurse.
- Accept that a resident has the right to make his or her own choices, even if you do not agree with them.
- Understand that the advance care planning process and decisions are affected by the disease the resident has, gender, age, religious beliefs and culture.
- Learn about the cultural differences that impact advance care planning.
- Learn what decisions residents under your care have made, and respect and honor their decisions, including those related to physical, psychosocial and spiritual needs.
- Help family members to accept their loved one's decisions.
- Expect that emotions may be strong when discussing end of life care with residents and family members.

Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country's 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes. Find out if your nursing home is part of the Advancing Excellence Campaign. To sign up or get more information, go to www.nhqualitycampaign.org. Document revised 07/23/10



Advance Care Planning Resources

Campaign Resources:

- "Top 10 Ideas to Involve All Staff in Advancing Excellence"
<http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org>
- "Implementing Change in Long-Term Care"
<http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org>
- "Campaign Goals and Objectives"
<http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org>

Best Practice Resources:

- Advance Care Planning: Preferences for Care at the End of Life
<http://www.innovations.ahrq.gov/content.aspx?id=686>
- Medical Issues to be Considered in Advance Care Planning
http://www.americanhospice.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=46&Itemid=8
- Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association Nursing Assistant TIPS Sheets
<http://www.hpna.org/DisplayPage.aspx?Title=TIPS>
- Guidelines for End-of-Life Care in Long-Term Care Facilities
<http://www.dhss.mo.gov/showmelongtermcare/EndofLifeManual.pdf>
- National Health Care Decisions Day
<http://www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org/>

Links to Relevant Organizations:

- Caring Connections
<http://www.caringinfo.org>
- Compassion and Support at the End of Life
<http://www.compassionandsupport.org>
- National Association of Health Care Assistants
<http://www.nahcacares.org>
- National Network of Career Nursing Assistants
<http://www.cna-network.org>
- Nursing Assistant Resources On The Web
<http://nursingassistants.net>
- American Association for Homes and Services for the Aged
<http://www.aahsa.org/>
- American Health Care Association
<http://www.ahcancal.org/>
- National Long Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center
<http://www.ltombudsman.org/>