

# End-of-Life Planning

A Webinar of the WNCA

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# Advance Care Planning

- The process of identifying our healthcare and end-of-life wishes.
- And, discussing this plan with our families and healthcare providers

# Benefits of Advance Care Planning

- Peace of mind for us and our families
- Ensures that we have the death that we want, however we define a good death.
- Frees us and our families for the important things: like cherishing time together

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# **ADVANCE DIRECTIVES**

# Health Care Power of Attorney

- An individual who can legally make decisions on your behalf, when you cannot.
- This is a different document from a Power of Attorney, which covers financial estate authority.
- Have a conversation with your HCPOA about your end-of-life wishes.

# Living Wills

- Document specifying your medical wishes, directing your HCPOA and healthcare providers on how to care for you if you are unable to communicate.
- Allows you to specify what kind of life-sustaining measures you want and do not want in several situations.

# Living Wills

- An incurable, irreversible condition that will result in death in a short period of time
  - Example: Cancer
- Unconsciousness, and physicians determine with high degree of certainty that consciousness will not return.
  - Example: Accident resulting in total loss of brain activity
- Advanced dementia or illness resulting in loss of cognitive ability and physicians determine it is irreversible.
  - Example: End-stage Alzheimer's Disease

# Living Wills

- Life-prolonging, life-support, measures
  - Respiratory ventilation
  - Artificial nutrition and hydration
  - Antibiotics



# **MEDICAL TERMS TO KNOW**

# CPR & DNR

- CPR is manually pumping the heart, forcing respirations, and utilizing medications to resuscitate the body, if the heart stops beating.
- Living Wills do not have authority over CPR.
- CPR is standardized practice in the event that the heart stops beating.
- DNR, “Do Not Resuscitate,” is a physicians order that can be requested from a physician, if CPR is not wanted.

# Comfort Care

- The cessation of treatments and most life-supporting measures
- Administering medications that manage pain and discomfort due to symptoms, such as shortness of breath or nausea.
- Providing personal care and respecting dignity

# Palliative Care Vs. Hospice

## Palliative Care

- Available to anyone suffering with serious illness.
- Improves quality of life by addressing symptoms and stress
- One does not need to stop treatments to receive palliative care.

## Hospice

- Available to anyone with a life prognosis of six months or less.
- Improves quality of life by addressing symptoms and stress, through “comfort care”
- Active treatments are stopped. The focus is on end-of-life care.



# **SPIRITUAL & PRACTICAL DECISIONS FOR END-OF-LIFE**

# Spiritual Decisions at End-of-Life

- Location of Death
- How do I define “a good death”?
- Environment & Atmosphere
- What would I like my loved ones to know?
- How would I like my family to remember me and honor me when I am gone?

# Spiritual Decisions at End-of-Life

- What is “quality of life” for me?
- What’s most important for me at the end of my life?
- What do I fear about the dying process?
- What spiritual or religious practices would I like provided for me and by whom?
- What religious, theological, or ethical questions do I have for my faith leader?

# Funeral Planning

- Burial
  - Burial location
- Cremation
  - What do I want to be done with my ashes?
- Body donation
- Selection of a funeral home or crematory
- Service



# **QUESTIONS & COMMENTS**



# RESOURCES

# How To Proceed

- Complete your advance directive
  - [Caring Info](#)
  - [Five Wishes](#)
- Have a conversation with your physician or your family
  - [Five Wishes](#)
  - [The Conversation Project](#)
- Sermon series or a small group in faith community
  - [The Conversation Project](#)
  - [Five Wishes](#)

# How To Proceed Cont.

- Book discussions
  - *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande
  - *Everything Happens For A Reason And Other Lies I've Loved* by Kate Bowler
- Attend a Death Café
  - Death Cafe



# **FINAL QUESTIONS & COMMENTS**

