

Advance Care Planning Communication Guide

Overview



The **INTERACT II Advance Care Planning Communication Guide** is designed to assist health professionals who work in nursing homes initiate and carry out conversations with residents and their families when there has been a decline in health status.

Communicating about advance care planning and end-of-life care involves all facility staff

- Physicians must communicate with residents and families about advance directives, but all staff need to be able to communicate about end-of-life care

This Guide should therefore be useful for:

- Nursing staff
- Primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants
- Social workers and social work designees
- Administrators and others who discuss goals of care with residents and family

The Guide may be helpful in discussions on:

- Advance Directives – such as a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care document and Living Will
- Plans for care when a sudden, life-threatening condition is diagnosed - such as a stroke, heart attack, pneumonia, or cancer that has spread throughout the body
- Plans for care when a resident's health is gradually deteriorating – such as progression of Alzheimer's disease or other dementia; weight loss without an obvious medical cause; and worsening of congestive heart failure, kidney failure, or chronic lung disease
- Considering a palliative care plan or enrolling in a hospice program

Adapted from:

"The Palliative Response – Sharing the Bad News," the Birmingham/Atlanta VA Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center

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