East West Forum
Death & Dying

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Overview

- Cultural barriers to a person centered and holistic approach to end of life
- Palliative Care
- Advanced care planning/Having the conversations
We are always called to heal, to comfort and to care for the whole person regardless of our ability to cure...

“Healing transcends survival.”

— Betty Ferrell, City of Hope, Los Angeles
ASCENSION HEALTH
PALLIATIVE CARE MODEL

DIAGNOSIS
OF LIFE
THREATENING
CONDITION
OR
DEBILITATING
ILLNESS OR
INJURY

DISEASE MODIFYING TREATMENT

PALLIATIVE CARE

HOSPICE
BEREAVEMENT

DISEASE PROGRESSION

CONDITION APPROPRIATE FOR PALLIATIVE CARE MAY OR MAY NOT PROGRESS TO DEATH

BIOLOGICAL DEATH
Palliative Care

▲ Palliative Care is an interdisciplinary healthcare approach

▲ which focuses on improving quality of life

▲ for persons living with or affected by chronic or life-threatening conditions,

▲ through the prevention, assessment, and relief of pain and other physical, psychosocial and spiritual symptoms,

▲ from the time of diagnosis throughout the process of living and dying.
Palliative Care

▲ Such excellent care will be provided according to need

▲ either concurrently with life-prolonging treatment or as the main focus of care,

▲ respecting the values and goals of individuals, their families and other loved ones.

▲ It will assist them to live fully in community, optimize function, facilitate goals and decision-making, provide opportunities for personal growth and healing,

▲ and will support families, other survivors and communities in their bereavement.
ADVANCE CARE PLANNING IS:

- Thinking about your preferences for medical treatment and care
- If you develop a chronic or life-threatening illness
ADVANCE CARE PLANNING IS:

- Talking about your wishes and options in the face of such illness with family and friends, **AND**
- Completing documents called Advance Directives to make your choices known
WHY?

• You may not be able to speak for yourself
• Your loved ones may not know what YOU want
• It is easier to respect YOUR wishes when they are known
• Talking will help you think about what you want
• Talking may even bring your family closer together
ABOUT WHAT?

- What it means to live well with illness
- Who you would want to make decisions for you if you cannot
- What your values and goals are
- What treatments/care you might want and might not want
ABOUT THIS

- What you most value about who you are and what you do
- What your concerns are about having a serious illness
- What your concerns are about end of life
AND ABOUT THIS

- What gives your life its purpose and meaning
- How important your spiritual/religious life is
- What you need for comfort and support as you journey through illness
- What priorities or values you want others to know
ABOUT YOUR CHOICES IF YOU:

- No longer can recognize/talk with loved ones
- No longer can think or talk clearly
- No longer can respond to commands/requests
- No longer can walk or are bed-ridden
- No longer can leave the house
HOW TO BEGIN TALKING

- No “right” way or “right” time to start exists
- The conversation does not have to be somber or mournful
- Just start with a story of someone’s experience
- Acknowledge the discomfort of talking