5 Things to Talk About with Your Patients and Clients

Choose one or more topics and sample questions that are right for you and your patient/client to make a plan for the best possible care.

INFORMATION

1. Let’s talk about your understanding of your health condition and treatments.
   • What’s your understanding of your health or illness? What would you like to know from me today?
   • Let’s look ahead: What information would help you plan for future care?

YOUR GOALS

2. Let’s talk about your goals and explore the care you want and do not want.
   • Tell me about your health and your goals. Are there things you’d like to be able to do?
   • What’s important to you - your values, family traditions, care choices and preferences?
   • What worries or concerns you?
   • What makes it harder to stay well? – (travel to appointments; problems with medicine; food, housing; feeling stressed; getting care close to home or at home; being alone).

YOUR PLAN

3. Let’s talk about your care plan and completing your planning documents.
   • Let’s discuss your current treatment and the plan for getting you to your goals.
   • Let’s set some do-able goals and make any adjustments: what are you able to do?
   • Knowing your goals and care preferences, here’s what I recommend. Does that sound right?
   • Would you like to complete your care planning documents? * You can complete-
     - Health Care Proxy: You choose a trusted person called a Health Care Agent to make care decisions for you if you are not able to make decisions yourself.
     - Personal Directive: Write down what’s important to you and your instructions for care.

KNOW YOUR CHOICES

Update Your Plan

4. Let’s be sure your plan is up to date and I know your care choices.
   • Let’s review your prognosis; have your priorities and care choices changed?
   • Here’s my understanding of the care you want and do not want. Is that correct?
   • Let’s review your medical record to make sure my notes reflect your choices.
   • Let’s check your Health Care Proxy and other documents are in your medical record.

HONOR YOUR CHOICES

5. Let’s be sure your care providers can honor your choices.
   • Let’s talk about what happens if you need emergency care and who can access your records.
   • Would you like to bring in your family/Health Care Agent to talk about your plan?
   • Would you like to talk more? Let’s schedule a time to continue our conversation.

Notes:
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

*Multilingual Health Care Proxy and Personal Directive are available on the Honoring Choices website.

See the Care Provider Conversation Guide Series on our website. Guide 1 helps you start a simple conversation. Guides 2-4 focus on managing health & chronic illness and living well with serious illness.