

Care Provider Guide 3: Living Well with Serious Illness

5 Things to Talk About with Your Patients & 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 condition? What would you like to know from me today?
- Would you like to hear about treatment options for added support, like Palliative Care and Hospice Care, and when they might fit into your care goals?

MY GOALS**2. Let's talk about your goals and explore the care you want and do not want.**

- Let's discuss your prognosis and care goals. Have your priorities changed?
- Tell me what a good day looks like and what you are able to do. What's a hard day look like?
- What's important to you - your values, family traditions, care choices and preferences?
- What worries you the most?
- What makes it hard to stay well- (travel to appointments; treatment side effects; cost of care, food, medicines, housing; feeling stressed or depressed; getting care close to or at home; need help).

MY PLAN**3. Let's talk about your care plan and completing your planning documents.**

- Let's review some treatments options that offer (extra) support and get you to your goals.
- What information would you like about possible tradeoffs you may face if your condition worsens?
- 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 or update your planning documents. * You can complete-
 - Health Care Proxy: Choose a Health Care Agent to make care decisions on your behalf.
 - Personal Directive: Write down what's important to you and your instructions for care.
 - MOLST OR CC/DNR: Let's talk about your treatment options given your current condition, and document the care you want in a MOLST form, Medical Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment form or a CC/DNR, Comfort Care/Do Not Resuscitate Order.

KNOW MY CHOICES
Update My Plan**4. Let's be sure your plan is up to date and I know your care choices.**

- Here's my understanding of the care you want and do not want. Is that correct?
 - If your condition worsens, and I am not able to speak with you, let's discuss and write down-
 - the type of treatments you are willing to go through to possibly gain more time;
 - at what point you'd prefer to stop active treatments and choose comfort care.
- Let's review your medical record to make sure my notes reflect your care choices.
- Let's check that your Health Care Proxy and/or MOLST are up to date and in your medical record.

HONOR MY CHOICES**5. Let's be sure your care providers can honor your choices.**

- Have you needed emergency care since we last spoke? Were your choices known and honored?
- Let's talk about steps can we take now to ensure in an emergency your records are available.
- How much does your family/ Health Care Agent know about your plan? Would you like to schedule a time to talk together, and explore the support available to your family?
- 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 and chronic illness and living well with serious illness.