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.

1. Let’s talk about your understanding of your health condition and treatments.
   - Let’s talk about palliative care and how it can fit into your regular care.
   - Here’s the relief you can expect in addressing your symptoms.
   - Here’s how palliative care can offer support to your family and caregivers.
   - What would you like to know from me today about palliative care?

2. Let’s talk about your goals and explore the care you want and do not want.
   - What symptoms would you like to address; what would you like to be able to do?
   - What is most important to you – your values, family traditions, care choices & preferences?
   - What worries you the most?
   - What things may make it harder to get palliative care - (travel to appointments; how to pay for care, my living situation; getting care close to home or at home, being alone; need help).

3. Let’s talk about your care plan and completing your planning documents.
   - Let’s review who is on your palliative care team and how they can help get you to your goals.
   - Here’s the palliative care treatments I would recommend for you; and for your family.
   - Would you like to complete or update your planning documents. * You can complete-
     - Health Care Proxy: Choose a Health Care Agent to make 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.

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?
   - Let’s review your medical record and my notes to make sure they reflect your care choices.
   - Let’s check your Health Care Proxy and/or MOLST are up to date and in your medical record.

5. Let’s be sure your care providers can honor your choices.
   - Have you needed emergency care recently? Was your palliative care plan followed?
   - Would you like to meet with your family/ Health Care Agent to talk about palliative care?
   - Would you like to talk more? Let’s schedule a time to continue our conversation.

Notes:

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*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.