

Advance Care Planning - Previsit Letter

At our next meeting I would like to facilitate a conversation with you about your illness, your goals and wishes, and planning for the future. This is an important part of the care we provide for all our patients.

It is important to talk about this when patients are doing okay. Your illness is serious, so now is a good time to talk about what is ahead, and to do some planning for the future. Patients who think through what is important to them and what their wishes are often feel less anxious, more at peace, and more in control of their situation. Our wish is for you and your family to feel cared for and supported by the team.

Before this meeting, you may want to think about these few things:

- What would you like to know about your illness and what is likely to be ahead?
- What kind of information would help you make decisions about your future?
- What is most important for you to have a good quality of life?
- What gives your life meaning?
- Are there any specific religious or cultural practices that we should be aware of?
- What are you afraid of about your illness?
- What kinds of medical care do you not want?
- What do you think it would be like to share these thoughts with your family?
- If you haven't already identified a health care proxy, who would be able to fill that role?
- Who would you like to be part of your team? And who not?
- What do you want us to know about you, to ensure we respect you as an individual?

Why is it important?

Thinking about and sharing your wishes will give you more control over the care you wish to get. It will also help prepare your loved ones to make decisions for you if you can't make them at some point in the future. Knowing what you want will ease the burden on your family of making hard decisions for you if you can't speak for yourself. We strive to respect your wishes and with this you are able to clearly communicate your wishes to us.

You may find it helpful to bring other people to your next appointment.

You can choose to bring the person who is your health care proxy or other family members to your next visit so they can be part of the conversation. This person may change over time and we understand that.

We understand your wishes might change over time.

This is the beginning of an ongoing conversation. We know that you may have other questions or concerns in the future. We will continue to support you and answer your questions so that you can make informed decisions. We will focus our support on both you and your family.