The Most Important Conversation We’re Not Having – Advance Care Planning

Webinar
Nov. 10, 2016
11:30 am – 1:00 pm

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The Institute of Medicine’s landmark study, “Dying in America,” confirms what many of us working in end of life care already knew... as a nation, we are not doing a good job of matching the care we provide at the end of life with what matters most to the patient and their loved ones. By engaging patients in meaningful conversations about their values, care preferences and what matters most to them, we can better match the care we provide with what patients’ want. Hospice and palliative care are crucial options for care at the end of life – supporting individual autonomy and a holistic approach to care.

This presentation will give direct care staff at all levels the tools they need to be better equipped to initiate, support and sustain conversations about end of life care preferences with patients and families as well as physicians, health care providers and community members.

Program Objectives:

- Define the unique role of health care providers in initiating, supporting and sustaining Advance Care Planning discussions.
- Apply a 5 step process for advance care planning that encompasses best practices for end of life decision making.
- Demonstrate beginning competencies around hosting patient conversations specific to advance care planning.
- Integrate the process of advance care planning into current practice.

About the Presenters:

Ellie Ward, BSN, RN has previously worked in both ICU and ED in urban settings. She moved to rural North Carolina in 1996, where she began working in home health and hospice as a direct care clinician and then as Nursing Director. Ellie enjoys working in, and with, Palliative Care and end-of-life care communities. She is particularly committed to developing and improving communication skills in having difficult conversations.

Mary Lou Infinito graduated from Nursing School in 1980. Following a career path that included Oncology Nursing and a life time of volunteering, Mary Lou realized that she had an intense interest in many areas of end of life care. She recognized that she was always meant to help people and be a part of the dying process for the patient and for those they loved. Mary Lou’s greatest life experience was working with Mother Teresa in Calcutta, India, where the impact of recognizing that everyone deserves to die with dignity was powerful.

Vicki Dougherty is a retired social worker – working first in Adult Services and then completing more than 30 years with county government as a Hospice Program Manager. Vicki’s passion for assisting patients and families during difficult times has led to numerous opportunities surrounding palliative care and end of life since her initial retirement.

The presenters are now combining their abilities and passions as Advance Care Planning Outreach Coordinators for Vidant Health, a regional health system serving 29 counties in eastern North Carolina. Their hope is to make advance care planning a routine part of health care, assuring that both families and the medical community are aware of and positioned to follow a patient’s individual choices for care.

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