

Advance Care Planning &

How to talk about some difficult topics related to COVID-19

Goals of Care (GOC) discussion

Explain reason for your contact, i.e., to talk about patients' illness and what is important to them in order to make sure we (health care service provider) provide them with the care they want.

Starting the conversation with the following questions:

- What is the patient's understanding of her/his illness;
- What does the patient want to know about her/his condition;
- What are the patient's beliefs, values and wishes for the future health care;
- What are the patient's fears and worries about the future of her/his illness;
- Whom should we talk to about the patient's treatments and potential outcome; and
- Whom does the patient want to make health care decisions if she/he is not able to direct her/his own care? Has the patient appointed someone to act as her/his Substitute Decision Maker?

If the patients have a life-limiting illness or injury, do they want to accept or refuse:

- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)?
- In their perspective, what does quality of life mean to them? For example, if there is going to be cognitive impairment and physical impairment, what is acceptable for them at the end of their lives?
- The best medical advice remains, will always remain, that in these frail populations, with this catastrophic illness (COVID-19), life support should be avoided, in order to protect our frail elder population from interventions that themselves contribute to added harm and suffering without providing any meaningful benefit.

