

March 23, 2020

***Memo to Coastal Family Physicians re:  
COVID-19 preparedness- establishing Goals of Care/Code Status with high-risk patients***

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing on behalf of the Lions Gate Hospital Emergency Physician group. During these unprecedented times we are in the phase of actively preparing/restructuring the emergency department and hospital in anticipation of increased numbers of potentially critically ill patients.

In an attempt to provide the highest quality of care and respect patients' wishes regarding their end-of-life preferences, we are hoping that now may be a time for community family physicians to encourage discussion on goals of care with their high-risk patients and families where they have not been already established.

As you are probably aware, there is unfortunately a big information gap in our current system - there is no link between office EMRs and hospital EMRs. As such, it is virtually impossible for us to access information about goals of care discussions unless the patient or family is able to convey this information. To get around this problem in such a critical time, it is probably best to rely on low-tech solutions such as a community DNR order, or even encouraging patients to write their health care wishes and substitute decision maker contact information on a piece of paper and carry it with them in the green sleeve. It would also be very useful for family members to be aware of their wishes. We welcome any other suggestions you may have.

We understand these are very uncertain, challenging and busy times for all physicians dealing with this public health crisis. Your input and open dialogue on this matter would be very much appreciated. Thank you for considering this request, and please contact me with any concerns/questions going forward.

Sincerely,

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*cc: Sean Staniforth, Peter Edmunds, Lindsay Cohen, Dave Williscroft*