Advanced Directives

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Suitable for:

Health Care

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Introduction

Helping a patient face the end of their life in a supportive way is one of the greatest challenges facing health care workers. Yet getting it right can be a profoundly rewarding and enriching experience for everyone involved. This program takes a detailed look at care at the end of life, primarily focusing on palliative care of individuals and their families. With a focus on the spiritual and supportive aspects of care rather than simply the physical care, this is a compassionate and empowering resource for health care workers. Information on the role and importance of advance care planning and advance directives is also presented.

Useful Resources

www.legalaid.vic.gov.au provides information on the laws according to advanced directives advanced care.

Palliative Care Australia

Department of Health and Ageing

Please visit our website for many more relevant programs www.vea.com.au

VEA – Bringing Learning to Life
Student Worksheet:

Before Viewing the Program

1. Use a trusted colleague to find out about the way in which your work place supports patients and families of palliative care.

2. Develop a list of the greatest challenges that you face as a care worker. Which challenges are positive and which are negative. What could be put into place to improve negative challenges?

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3. Investigate and detail the advanced care planning that occurs in either your workplace or another workplace where palliative care occurs.

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While Viewing the Program

1. What does DNR stand for?

2. What did you learn about the two cases shown in the program about patient needs, wants and directives?

3. The laws with regard to advanced directive are not the same between all countries of the world. Differences exist between Australian and the US for example. Why do you think that this is the case?

4. What is a living will? When are these effective?

5. What is a power of attorney?

6. Who can determine competency?

7. Consider the questions for yourself:
   
   Would you want to be ventilated?

   Would you want to be comatised?

   Do you agree with the use of antibiotics?

8. DNRs need to be discussed with?
9. How can courts become involved in DNR decisions?

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10. What are your feelings with regard to the two scenarios presented in the program?

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11. How does this program define an advanced directive?

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12. What are the two most common advanced directives?

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13. Who can sign advanced directives?

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After Viewing the Program

1. Turn and talk to the person next to you and share your experience of palliative care.

2. Have you written your own wishes down on paper? If so why have you done this? If not what would be your wishes? Detail these:

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3. Investigate the policies and procedures in your place of work with regard to advanced directives:

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4. How are advanced directives enforced in your work place or another workplace that provide patient care?

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5. Investigate the way in which you could write a will in Australia. What is the difference between a “will kit” and will prepared by a legal adviser like a solicitor?

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6. What happens in Australia if a person does not have a will or has not detailed their advanced directives?

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7. When have you come across advanced directive that you have not agreed with? How have you tackled this situation? Evaluate the way in which you reacted or acted. Would you change anything next time?

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Suggested Student Responses:

**While Viewing the Program**

1. What does DNR stands for?
   **Do not resuscitate**

2. What did you learn about the two cases shown in the program about patient needs, wants and directives?

3. The laws with regard to advanced directive are not the same between all countries of the world. Differences exist between Australian and the US for example. Why do you think that this is the case?

4. What is a living will? When are these effective?
   **A will made a person who is living and well. Also only useful when a person is alive.**

5. What is a power of attorney?
   **A legal document that allows someone else to make decision and choices for the patient.**

6. Who can determine competency?
   **Doctor or other physician.**

7. Consider the questions for yourself:
   - Would you want to be ventilated?
   - Would you want to be comatized?
   - Do you agree with the use of antibiotics?

8. DNRs need to be discussed with?
   **A physician**

9. How can courts become involved in DNR decisions?

10. What are your feelings with regard to the two scenarios presented in the program?

11. How does this program define an advanced directive?
    **A written document an individual prepares stating how he or she wants medical decisions made if they should lose the ability to make decisions for themself.**

12. What are the two most common advanced directives?
    **A living willing and a power of attorney.**

13. Who can sign advanced directives?
    **Adult, witnesses, people not related to the family**