



Advance Care Planning & Goals of Care During Covid19

At Providence Health Care, we respect the dignity of every person in our care, and we believe in the importance of talking to our patients, residents and their families about what matters most to them. That is why advance care planning and goals of care have always been an important part of what we do. These conversations are even more important now in this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Advance care planning is thinking about and sharing your wishes and goals for care in the future if you can no longer speak for yourself. Advance care planning is something all of us should do (and many of us have done!), whether we are healthy or unwell, younger or older.

Advance care planning is thinking about questions like:

- What would matter most to me if I became unwell and couldn't communicate?
- What would my goals be?
- What might I be afraid of?
- What would I be willing to go through for the possibility of living longer?
- Who would I want to make decisions for me?
- What medical treatments would I accept? What would I refuse?

Decisions about health care are partly based on a person's values or beliefs. For example, some people may want to live as long as possible, whatever it takes. These people might feel that tests and treatment are worth the burden if they can live longer.

Other people may feel that they would not want to have tests and treatment that may not help. These people might wish to focus on therapies that give them quality of life and comfort in the time they have left.

The time we are living through now presents unprecedented challenges across the world, as well as here in British Columbia. We are being asked to stay a safe distance from each other and to isolate ourselves if we become sick in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. At the same time, we are asked to support each other, and to make decisions that are best not just for us but for our loved ones and for our community.

One of the things we are encouraging everyone in the Providence family to do is ensure that we reflect on our advance care planning wishes, goals, and fears in light of the serious outbreak of this virus. Many things are out of our control in this time, but we can identify who we would want to speak for us if we are unable to speak for ourselves and we can share with that person and all our loved ones what would matter most to us if we get sick. This may not be an easy conversation for some, but it is an important one. Advance care planning has been called by many "a gift to our family" as this conversation can bring guidance and comfort at a time of sickness and difficult decisions. And it is a meaningful conversation that can bring us closer together in a challenging time that, as a Providence family, we will get through together!