

Lead by Example

April 16 is National Healthcare Decisions Day

April 16 has been designated National Healthcare Decisions Day, a collaborative effort of national, state and community organizations committed to ensuring that all adults with decision-making capacity in the United States have the information and opportunity to communicate and document their healthcare decisions. The objectives of NHDD are to provide much-needed information to the public, reduce the number of tragedies that occur when a person's wishes are unknown, and improve the ability of healthcare facilities and providers to offer informed and thoughtful guidance about advance healthcare planning to their patients.

Why document your healthcare decisions?

- *Reduce the number of tragedies when your wishes are not known*
- *Improve the ability of healthcare facilities and providers to align care with your wishes after informed/thoughtful guidance from advance healthcare planning*

Website nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org has been developed to help raise public awareness, to inform the public, to provide

tools to start conversations about future healthcare decisions, and to write advance directives (healthcare power of attorney and living wills) in accordance with Virginia laws.

As a physician, you can:

Raise awareness of the wisdom of making healthcare decisions before they are needed in time of crisis.

Encourage your patients to take the step to plan ahead... to make those future healthcare decisions through a written advance directive.

Lead by example. Complete YOUR advance directives and encourage your staff to do so as well. Leading by example will prepare you and your staff to answer questions and be of help to your patients.

We are available to help you, your family, staff and patients, to provide information on advance care planning. Call us... at Good Samaritan Hospice.

Make advance care planning a routine part of health care.

Discuss it with all patients, the sick and the well, young and old, and keep the conversation going. Tailor the conversation to the patient's health status and clinical circumstance.

Improving Care for the End of Life by
Joanne Lynn, MD, Janice Lynch Schuster
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Thank you for reading Physician Matters. Please let us know how we can help answer your questions about hospice care and the benefits to your patients. We may print your question in a future issue.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alice Inouye".

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris W. Pile".

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