

Courageous Conversations for National Hospice & Palliative Care Awareness Month.

Sponsored By: Putnam County HomeCare & Hospice
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Courageous Conversations

NATIONAL
Hospice & Palliative Care
MONTH

“ Speaking with your Family and Doctor about choosing Hospice ”

PUTNAM COUNTY
HOMECARE & HOSPICE

This month is National Hospice & Palliative Care Awareness Month. This gives us the opportunity to not only highlight the services our compassionate and caring staff and volunteers give to our community, but also the opportunity to flip the script when it comes to planning for your future medical needs.

This year we are starting COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS for you! This week we have 'Speaking with your Family and Doctor about choosing Hospice. Dr. Eickholt helps us gain a little insight on this. So, let's dive in!

“If you’ve been dealing with a chronic illness, and you want to focus more on quality of life and comfort rather than hospitalizations or potentially uncomfortable treatments, it may be time to talk with your doctor to see if hospice aligns with your goals. Often people who have had several hospitalizations in the previous months are tired of going to the hospital or many repeated doctor’s appointments. They wish to instead spend their time enjoying family or activities they enjoy, as much as possible and with the least amount of pain or bothersome symptoms as possible. While these initially can be difficult conversations, they are important conversations. The patient and their families typically feel immense relief and gratefulness when they’ve made the decision to start with hospice.”

Discussing Hospice Care with you family and doctor can be a challenging but important conversation, especially if you or a loved one is facing a life limiting illness. Here are some tips on how to approach this conversation:

1. Timing is crucial: Choose an appropriate time to have the conversation when everyone can be present and focus on the discussion without distractions. It's best not to wait until the last moment when a medical crisis occurs.
2. Be informed: Before discussing hospice care, educate yourself about what hospice entails, what services it provides, and how it can benefit you or your loved one. This will help you answer questions and alleviate concerns.
3. Involve the healthcare provider: Having a healthcare professional, such as your doctor, present during the discussion can be very beneficial. They can explain the patient's condition and prognosis, which can help in understanding the need for hospice care.
4. Include all concerned parties: Ensure that all family members who have a stake in the decision are part of the conversation. This can help avoid misunderstandings and ensure that everyone is on the same page.
5. Be honest and open: Express your thoughts, concerns, and feelings honestly. It's important to create a safe space for everyone to share their perspectives, fears, and questions.

6. Understand goals and wishes: Discuss the patient's goals, preferences, and wishes for their end-of-life care. These can guide the decision-making process.

7. Address concerns: Be prepared to address any concerns or misconceptions your family may have about hospice care. Explain that hospice focuses on improving the quality of life and providing comfort and support.

8. Ask questions: Encourage your family and doctor to ask any questions they may have. This can help clarify any doubts and ensure that everyone is well-informed.

9. Respect decisions: Ultimately, the decision to choose hospice should align with the patient's wishes and needs. Respect their autonomy and choices, even if it's difficult for family members.

10. Plan ahead: Once a decision is made, work with the healthcare provider to develop a plan for transitioning to hospice care. This plan should include details about the services provided, the hospice team, and the patient's specific needs and preferences.

The decision to choose Hospice Care is a personal one. It's important to prioritize the comfort and well-being of the patient. Having open and compassionate communication with your family and healthcare provider is essential in making the best choices for end-of-life care. Be COURAGEOUS in your care and in your life.

For more information, you can call us at 419-523-4449. Also, feel free to check out the resources and newsletters we have on our website.

At PCHH, we're just 'Friends Helping Friends'.