



# Palliative Care Initiative LIFE UPenn

Karen Nichols MD

Deborah Way MD

# LIFE Palliative Care History

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- Until 2007 LIFE staff received no official training in end of life issues
- Family preparation for decline and death happened most often in The Circle of Care – the closed dementia unit
- No hospice referrals were made
- Although the nurse practitioners and collaborating physicians were supportive of a palliative care initiative, there was no formal direction

# LIFE Palliative Care History

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- Several new members of LIFE staff had strong hospice background and so helped begin the discussion about end of life training
- These and several other members of LIFE staff attended ELNEC in California in 2007

# LIFE Palliative Care History

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- Hospice interviews and visits – especially around communication patterns and care provided
- Discussion around which of LIFE’s frail elders would be best served by a formal hospice plan of care
- Discussion around which of LIFE’s frail elders would be best served by a palliative plan of care
- Staff education
  - Formal
    - Continued attendance at ELNEC
    - Staff week long series of “Facing Death with Dignity”
  - Informal

# LIFE Palliative Care History

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- Palliative Care Committee founded 2009. Committee members included staff from all disciplines.
- Palliative Care Committee Mission:
  - Allow members to have a “good death” based on member preferences
  - Create a comfortable environment for staff, members and families to explore and address end of life issues
  - Provide a supportive presence around end of life issues

# LIFE Advance Directives

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- Five Wishes chosen as the LIFE vehicle to discuss end of life choices
  - Presented to Council of Elders
  - Presented to LIFE member focus groups
  - Presented to LIFE members and their families
  - Palliative Care Nursing students met with members one on one to help prepare Five Wishes documents (ongoing)

# LIFE Palliative Care Committee Activities 2010-2011

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- All expert panel discussion “Culture, Conversations, and Caring”
- What does the end of life look like?
  - Part of Annual Staff In-service
- 9 session whole staff education series
- 2 primary care and social work education sessions on “Having the Difficult Conversation”
- Bulletin board to allow staff to “honor” the members who have died

# LIFE Palliative Care Committee Activities 2010-2011

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- Committee chair changed
- Formal review of palliative care literature commenced
- Role play as part of annual staff in-service
- Palliative care committee and its work a formal part of new staff orientation
- POLST now the formal DNR form for all members
  - Used in conjunction with Five Wishes
  - Compliance is an issue

# LIFE Ongoing Efforts Toward Palliative Care

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- Palliative Care Consult Team
  - Available to assist with family meetings
- Post-death tracking- Did we honor their wishes?
  - Survey to family
  - Follow AD, place, hospice involvement
- Continuing education for staff members
  - Formal
  - Informal
- Bereavement support for staff and members
- Utilize Outside Hospice
  - Appropriate in which members/settings?
  - Made agreements with select companies, share responsibility

# LIFE – What's Possible With Hospice

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- Similarities between PACE and Hospice
  - Interdisciplinary team
  - Services and products provided
- Differences between PACE and Hospice
  - Formal bereavement program
  - Volunteers
  - On-call visits for after hours emergencies
  - Inpatient unit
- Differences between PACE and other insurers

# LIFE-What's Possible With Hospice

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- Still in the works
- Potential for a different structure of hospice services and reimbursement
  - Choose services needed
  - Choose desired type of hospice
  - Create request for proposal

# Questions?

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[karenjn@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:karenjn@nursing.upenn.edu)

[dway@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:dway@nursing.upenn.edu)