

# This Thanksgiving Talk about the Care You Would Want

*NHPCO Encourages Americans to Spend Time Talking about Health Care Choices before Facing a Crisis*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- A family is gathered by the bedside of a loved one who has been seriously ill, and now is

likely near the end of life. Each member of the family has a different idea of what should be done and what their loved one would have wanted. That's the point when they realize they should have planned ahead and talked about what they each would want in a medical crisis.



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*Edo Banach*

Heartbreaking scenes like this happen far too often.

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization ([NHPCO](#)) is encouraging families to spend time when they may be gathered for the holidays, to talk about the care they would or would not want. This can be in person or virtually given that many people may not travel this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Holidays can be an ideal time to think about [advance care planning](#).

“Having discussions about one’s health care wishes is part of advance care planning,” said NHPCO President and CEO Edo Banach. “While this is particularly important if a family is coping with a serious or life-limiting illness of a loved one, advance care planning is important for everyone to think about.”

Advance care planning involves making decisions about the care you would want to receive in a medical crisis that might be the result of a serious illness or an unexpected accident. Advance care planning also involves deciding who will speak for you if you are not able to speak for yourself.

An essential part of advance care planning involves having these important conversations with your loved ones.

Advance care planning discussions can include:

- **CARE YOU WANT:** Deciding what types of treatment you would or would not want should you be diagnosed with a life-limiting illness or faced with a serious medical crisis.
- **WHAT'S IMPORTANT:** Sharing your personal values and beliefs with your loved ones.
- **ADVANCE DIRECTIVES:** Completing an advance directive to put into writing what types of treatment you would or would not want.
- **WHO WILL SPEAK FOR YOU:** Designating a person as your health care power of attorney (sometimes called a health care proxy) to speak for you if you cannot speak for yourself.

Not only is it important for each of us to clearly make our wishes known but it is one of the most important gifts we can give to our families and loved ones.

Hospice and palliative care providers see how difficult it can be for families that have never talked about care choices and are in a crisis situation. Similarly, they see how beneficial it can be when the priorities at life's end have been discussed and are clearly understood.

NHPCO's CaringInfo.org offers free state-specific [advance directive forms](#) and free information to help families talk about the care they would want.

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About NHPCO

As the leading organization representing integrated, person-centered healthcare, NHPCO gives ongoing inspiration, practical guidance, and legislative representation to hospice and palliative care providers so they can enrich experiences for patients and ease caregiving responsibilities and emotional stress for families.

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