



### Featured VITAS Expert

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## CE Webinar for Healthcare Professionals

### Advance Directives and Advance Care Planning

**GOAL:** To educate healthcare clinicians about advance directives and advance care planning, as well as serve as a support resource for those individuals. The objective of Advance Care Planning (ACP) is to help ensure that patients receive medical care that is aligned with their values, goals and preferences.

#### Key Takeaways:

1. Most people nearing the end of life are not physically or cognitively able to make their own decisions about care. Advance care planning (ACP) and advance directives allow patients to make their preferences known early, decreasing the likelihood of repeated hospitalization near the end of life while increasing hospice utilization and patient satisfaction.
2. ACP is appropriate for adults at any age or stage of life. Physicians may wish to initiate conversations with patients who are experiencing chronic illness and diagnosed with life-limiting illness. The primary objective of ACP is to ensure that patients receive care that aligns with their goals and values.
3. Advance directives are legal documents that allow patients to formally outline what actions should be taken or not taken regarding their care in case they are no longer able to make those decisions themselves. Documents include living wills, durable powers of attorney for healthcare, and physician or medical orders for life-sustaining treatment.
4. The advance directive evolved from the patient and consumer rights movements of the 1960s and '70s, when the US Supreme Court established patients' constitutional right to refuse life-sustaining treatment. In 1990, the Patient Self-Determination Act provided incentives for hospices and other providers to inform patients of their right to guide their own healthcare decisions.
5. Physicians can have more effective conversations with their patients using the SPIKES system: setting, perception, invitation, knowledge, empathy, summation.

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