

# Serious Illness Conversation Guide

## CLINICIAN STEPS

### Set up

- Thinking in advance
- Is this okay?
- Hope for best, prepare for worst
- Benefit for patient/family
- No decisions necessary today

### Guide (right column)

### Act

- Affirm commitment
- Make recommendations about next steps
  - Acknowledge medical realities
  - Summarize key goals/priorities
  - Describe treatment options that reflect both
- Document conversation
- Provide patient with Family Communication Guide

## CONVERSATION GUIDE

### Understanding

What is your understanding now of where you are with your illness?

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### Information preferences

How much information about what is likely to be ahead with your illness would you like from me?

FOR EXAMPLE:

Some patients like to know about time, others like to know what to expect, others like to know both.

### Prognosis

***Share prognosis as a range, tailored to information preferences***

### Goals

If your health situation worsens, what are your most important goals?

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### Fears / Worries

What are your biggest fears and worries about the future with your health?

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### Function

What abilities are so critical to your life that you can't imagine living without them?

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### Trade-offs

If you become sicker, how much are you willing to go through for the possibility of gaining more time?

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### Family

How much does your family know about your priorities and wishes?

(Suggest bringing family and/or health care agent to next visit to discuss together)

