Sharing Your Wishes:
Advance Directives, Advocacy and Wellness
Your Speakers:

Daleasha Hall, MDiv, MBA, BCC
- System Director of Hospice and Palliative Care for PeaceHealth
- Trained facilitator and instructor for Respecting Choices
- Board Certified Chaplain
- Party planner, treasure hunter, and sunshine chaser with family and friends

April Duff, BSc
- Advance Care Planning Program Coordinator – PeaceHealth in Vancouver, WA
- Trained facilitator and instructor for Honoring Choices PNW and Respecting Choices
- Volunteer for Guide Dogs for the Blind – Clark County
- Volunteer 4-H youth extension
- Interests in pet therapy and canine companions

Melissa Ensey, MSEd.
- Advance Care Planning Program Coordinator – PeaceHealth in Longview, WA
- Trained facilitator for Honoring Choices PNW
- Mental Health Counselor by training – Previous work with social services and dual diagnosis treatment
- Loves cooking, gardening and coaching soccer for her four kiddos
Overview of Today’s Topics

- Reflecting on your values and personal beliefs
- Navigating the healthcare landscape as a patient or an agent
- Discovering advance care planning and why it is important
- Connecting with other resources in the community to advance this important work
What do you value?

- What makes your life worth living?
- What level of engagement with others is important to you?
- What is your “line in the sand”?

Example: “to me, to be alive is to be able to read, write, speak out, learn, share and care among others in my community. If I cannot do so, it is time to move on to a more fruitful continuance of soul growth. To me, that transition is death”

*Theo Wells, author of “Take care of Dying, Get on with Living” (at 90!)*
Advocacy & Engagement with Healthcare

- Self-advocacy as a component of ‘full living’
- Strategies for engagement with healthcare providers
- Navigating the healthcare adventure

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”

- Helen Keller
What is advance care planning?

- It’s sharing your personal goals, values, religious and cultural beliefs, and what matters for your quality of life, as well as completing an advance directive.

- An advance directive is a legal form that you fill out to describe the kinds of medical care you want to have if something happens to you and you can’t speak for yourself.

- Putting your wishes in writing helps avoid confusion or conflict in times of crisis or uncertainty.
Why advance care planning?

- **People are more likely to receive care** that matches their goals and honors their wishes.
  - 82% say it’s important to put their wishes in writing
  - 23% have actually done it

- **People are more likely to be where** they want to be at end of life.
  - 70% prefer to spend last days at home
  - 70% die in long-term care or hospital

- **People spend less time in the hospital** at end-of-life with less aggressive, non-beneficial treatment.
  - 10 fewer days spent in hospital during last two years if patient participated in advance care planning
Why aren’t people doing it?

Barriers to the conversation and putting it in writing:

- Talking about end-of-life is not easy – it needs skilled, facilitated conversations (*this topic is uncomfortable for everyone*)
- It can be confusing (e.g., there are 8+ different documents in Washington state)
- People believe they need a lawyer.
- What else?

You tell us!
POLST is NOT an Advance Directive
Choosing a Healthcare Agent:

What is a healthcare agent? Someone who will make healthcare decisions on your behalf.

- Who do I choose?
- Choose someone you:
  - Trust
  - Believe will follow your medical decisions even if they don't agree with them
  - Can handle stressful and uncertain situations
Who decides if you DON’T choose a healthcare agent?

Legal order of decision maker:
- Healthcare Agent
- Spouse or Registered Domestic Partner (even if separated)
- Adult Children*
- Parents*
- Adult Siblings*
- Adult Grandchildren*
- Adult Nieces & Nephews*
- Adult Aunts & Uncles*
- A close friend that meets certain criteria*

*in Washington state, if there is more than one person in a category, all must agree; other states may have different rules.
To treat or not to treat?

- Most documents cover only terminal diagnosis and persistent vegetative state or a coma (all that has been required by Legislature)
- Comfort care will always be provided
  - Pain
  - Anxiety
  - Breathlessness
Continue the conversation and revise as needed

Use to these 5D’s to refresh your plan:

- **Decade** – When you hit 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90+!
- **Divorce** – Does this change your healthcare agent choice?
- **Diagnosis** – Do you have a new or worsening health condition?
- **Decline in health** – Has your health condition changed? Are you as independent as you once were?
- **Death** – The death of a significant person in your life may create new viewpoints or values or you may need a new healthcare agent.
In Summary

- All adults 18+ should have a directive that includes
  - Healthcare agent (Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare)
  - Healthcare directive (specific instructions about the care they want)

- Advocacy starts with clear expectations of care someone wants to receive
  - How does treatment align with values?
  - How to partner with providers
Ready to get started? Here’s what our community needs:

1. **Encouragement to Have the Conversation** about what their wishes would be and who will be their healthcare agent.

2. **Completion of Documents** with local leaders choosing to lead by example and complete their own Advance Directives.

3. **Awareness and Education** of the issue, where to access resources to complete the forms and normalization of the conversation.

4. **Advocacy** at the state and local level – Recognition of events like National Health Care Decisions Day; Creation of a statewide POLST repository.
Your plan is done. What now?

- Make copies of your Advance Directive documents; Keep the original

- Give copies to:
  - Your Healthcare Agent(s)
  - Your Primary Care Provider
  - And mail or fax a copy to your local hospital (OR a PeaceHealth hospital).

  **PeaceHealth**  
  Attention: Health Information Management  
  1115 SE 164th Avenue, Dept 336  
  Vancouver, WA 98683  
  OR Fax to: 360-729-3378

You may call 360-729-1300 to ask PeaceHealth to confirm your Advance Directive is on file.
Community Resources and Supports

- End of Life Coalition of Southwest Washington - [www.eolcoalition.org](http://www.eolcoalition.org)
- The Vancouver Clinic – [www.tvc.org](http://www.tvc.org)
- Honoring Choices Pacific Northwest - [https://www.honoringchoicespnw.org/](https://www.honoringchoicespnw.org/)
- The Conversation Project - [https://theconversationproject.org/](https://theconversationproject.org/)
For More Information:

[www.peacehealth.org/advance-care-planning](http://www.peacehealth.org/advance-care-planning)

- Access to ALL forms and FAQs
- Registration for Upcoming FREE Classes:

  Monday, August 26th – 4-5:30pm - Vancouver
  Wednesday, August 28th – 2:30-4pm – Longview

Available for community groups by request!