

The following recommendations can help you increase organizational awareness of the value of advance care planning, make the case for starting or expanding your program, and gain deeper organizational support for your advance care planning initiatives.

Making a Compelling Case for Engaging in Advance Care Planning Initiatives

1. Understand what is important to your organization so you can align your proposed (or current) advance care planning program. Familiarize yourself with the strategic priorities for your organization, department, and/or team. Pay attention to goals, measures or outcomes included in the strategic imperatives. These are statements of what matters most to the organization.
2. Consider how advance care planning can address issues that are important to the organization. Think about clinical outcomes that might be improved by advance care planning, community awareness measures, communication measures, patient or clinician engagement, etc.
3. Do some research. Find research articles that help you make a connection between the known value of advance care planning activities and your organization's priorities. You can start by reviewing links to research articles on the Five Wishes Practice Community page (www.FiveWishes.org/practice). Find information about how advance care planning improves outcomes, reduces the cost of care, reduces hospitalizations, increases referrals to hospice, or whatever aligns with your organization's strategic priorities and your leadership's current concerns.



Gain Support from a Champion and a Sponsor

1. Identify likely champions for your advance care planning program. A champion can lead and coordinate the work, and serve as the representative for the program. Champions can be formal or informal leaders. They must be passionate about advance care planning, understand the value of advance care planning, and be willing to put work into the program. Consider who might already be most involved, most passionate, and most informed about advance care planning.
2. Identify a sponsor to advocate for and allocate the resources needed for the work. Sponsors should have some influence over budgetary decisions, and be able to help present your proposed program or project as a budget consideration. A good sponsor should have influence and relationships that can help affect budget allocations, staffing, workflow alterations, quality improvement projects, etc. If you have a Foundation, the sponsor should help you apply for funding.

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Identify and Propose Advance Care Planning Initiatives

1. Using what you have learned about what matters most to your organization and what advance care planning can address, identify some specific initiatives. Consider what kind of advance care planning program makes the most sense for your organization. In what areas could the organization and the people it serves benefit the most from advance care planning activities? Where are the greatest connections between current issues or goals and the benefits of advance care planning?
2. Research what your organization already measures related to the above. Clinical data, utilization data, referral sources, inquiries, documentation in the EHR, and other information can all be helpful. Knowing current measures can help you propose your program in terms of the potential improvements you anticipate in these measures. This also helps you determine possible measures for your initiative or program.

3. Start small, and consider time-limited initiatives if necessary. Pilot programs, quality improvement projects, and single events or limited series of community events are good starting places if you need to demonstrate success and work your way toward more substantial programming.
4. Consider resources required for your initiative or program. You might need to determine anticipated staff time, dollars, process changes, and resources. As you engage in your initiative, keep track of resources as this helps you determine what is required to generate the outcomes you deliver. This way, you can build on your success and grow your program.

Five Wishes is available to provide guidance and support as you build your advance care planning program. Contact us and we will be happy to help ensure your success.

Five Wishes Practice Community *Elevating Advance Care Planning in Healthcare Systems*

The Five Wishes Practice Community is a collaborative community of healthcare professionals who use the Five Wishes program for advance care planning. The goal of the practice community is to enhance your outcomes and elevate your practice through sharing best practice stories, resources, information, and more.

Membership is free, and available to any health professionals who use any components of the Five Wishes program.