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Veteran Advance Care Planning for Health Care

VA Advance Care Planning

VA program helps Veterans, caregivers plan for future health care needs

[VA's National Advance Care Planning via Group Visits Program](#) engages Veterans, caregivers and those they trust in facilitated group conversations about the kind of care that's right for each of them. It also covers the steps you can take to have your wishes heard and respected when the need arises. The words "advance care planning" can mean different things depending upon who you ask. It's a process of identifying your values and preferences for future health care if you are unable to make health care decisions.

► Watch Advance Care Planning Video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zZnjturLz0

Any time a person is unable to communicate for themselves, advance care planning can assist caregivers and health care providers in decision-making. Unexpected life events can happen in an instant. Advance care planning can empower individuals in gaining a sense of control over their health care.

Participant Experience

Participants connect through sharing their experiences and stories in small group settings. A trained facilitator meets with participants who are encouraged to consider what matters most to them. Groups are offered in person and virtually.

Veterans and caregivers are welcome to attend a group session regardless of age or health status. Participants are invited to bring a person they trust with them. Knowledge of advance care planning is not necessary for participation.

The conversation includes questions such as:

- Have you thought about what you would want if you were hurt, injured or sick and could not communicate?
- Have you named someone to make health care decisions for you?
- Have you discussed these topics with someone on your health care team?

Feedback from group participants:

- “My VA providers have asked me about completing an advance directive so many times they have even given me copies of the form! It never made sense to me until I attended an ACP-GV group.” – Veteran, Nashville, TN
- “I had the chance to attend a group for myself with other caregivers in the Caregiver Support Program. The discussion with other caregivers helped me realize that I had been neglecting my own health care planning! I set a goal for myself during the group and followed through.” – Caregiver, Houston

Those interested in attending a group visit may reach out to their local [VA Healthcare System Site Lead](#).

Resources

- Learn more at [VHA Social Work](#)
- Check out [The Conversation Project](#) for non-Veteran, state-specific resources
- See this additional information on VA [Geriatrics and Extended Care](#)
- Learn how to implement this program at the VA [Diffusion Marketplace](#)
- Contact us by email: [National ACP-GV Program](#)

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