

NRC *insights*

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Educating the public and caregivers about a variety of issues related to aging.



Northfield
Retirement Community
Innovation. Choice. Tradition.

Imagine reaching a point in your life when decisions about your care and treatment must be made, but you are incapacitated and unable to make them yourself. You might be badly injured, terminally ill or in the late stages of dementia. The decisions to be made might include what measures to take, if any, to extend your life, or when to stop treatment and provide you with only "comfort care."

Advance Care **PLANNING**

If you are unable to make your own decisions, it is crucial for others – your loved ones and healthcare providers – to know what you would wish for yourself. Thinking about and stating those wishes in advance is called **advance care planning**.

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Advance Care Planning continued from cover

Advance care planning is an important step that everyone should consider. You should take action now, while you are able. Decisions about end-of-life care are very personal and should be based on your values and beliefs. Letting your preferences be known ensures that others will not need to guess what you would want. It is a gift of peace of mind, both to yourself and to those who may be called upon to make those difficult decisions on your behalf.

Advance care planning involves:

- **Learning** about the kinds of decisions that might need to be made in various situations,
- **Considering** those decisions ahead of time,
- **Sharing** your values with your loved ones, and
- **Writing** down your preferences in documents called advance directives.

Advance directives are legal documents that go into effect only if you are incapacitated and unable to speak for yourself. You may have more than one kind of advance directive. An advance directive that includes end-of-life instructions is often called a **living will**. Another kind of advance directive is a **healthcare power of attorney**, which allows you to appoint as your healthcare agent someone you trust to make medical decisions on your behalf.

In Minnesota and some other states, your doctor can also sign a **physician order for life-sustaining treatment (POLST)** that reflects the end-of-life wishes you have discussed with her or him. Advance care



planning discussions with your physician are covered under Medicare.

Some of the situations you should think about and discuss with your family, your doctor and your healthcare agent include:

- Are there treatments you particularly want to receive or refuse?
- If your heart stopped, under what circumstances would you want doctors to use CPR to try to resuscitate you?
- When nearing the end of life, under what circumstances, or for how long, would you want to receive treatments such as antibiotics, kidney dialysis, mechanical ventilation (a breathing tube), tube feeding, or intravenous (IV) fluids for hydration?
- Do you want to make organ or tissue donations upon your death, or donate your body for scientific study?

You do not need a lawyer to complete an advance directive. However, to ensure that your wishes will be honored, you must carefully follow the steps required for advance directives by the state(s) you live in.

Advance care planning is important and meaningful. Research shows that people who document their preferences in an advance directive are more likely to get the care they prefer at the end of life than people who do not. And that's an outcome worth planning for.

RESOURCES FOR ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

Minnesota Health Care Directive

caringinfo.org/files/public/ad/Minnesota.pdf

Honoring Choices Minnesota

honoringchoices.org

Videos honoringchoices.org/tools-resources/videos

"Five Wishes" Living Will agingwithdignity.org

National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization

nhpco.org/advance-care-planning

National Institute on Aging

nia.nih.gov/health/publication/advance-care-planning

Technology Expands Options for “Aging in Place”



“I want to stay right here in my home.” That’s a wish many people express when the topic of making the move to a senior services community comes up. Their families may wonder how to ensure Grandpa stays safe, and if a crisis occurs – a fall, a sudden illness – staying at home may no longer be possible.

One way to make the home aging-friendly and stretch available resources further is assistive technology, available for a modest investment compared to that of in-home care or assisted living. Technology from providers such as HealthSense® (now known as GreatCall®) and GrandCare™ can make living at home safer and alert family members promptly if something is wrong. The remarkable capabilities of today’s systems include:

- Wireless monitors that sense whether Grandpa is moving around the home as usual
- Digital health sensors that alert caregivers if Grandma’s wellness readings fall out of the healthy range
- Morning greetings, medication prompts and other reminders

Acting *before* a crisis occurs can make all the difference for successful aging at home.

SEE HOW THEY WORK:

For more information, visit greatcall.com and grandcare.com.



LEADINGAGE GRANT WILL ENGAGE LOCAL YOUTH IN HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE

Northfield ParkView, a housing option on the Northfield Retirement Community campus, has received a \$25,000 grant from LeadingAge Minnesota to engage youth in early workforce exploration in healthcare fields with an aging population.

Locally, this grant provides collaboration opportunities between Northfield Retirement Community, Northfield Public Schools and Northfield Promise, an initiative focused on supporting youth by meeting 10 benchmarks that begin in early childhood and culminate when students graduate from high school prepared for their futures.

As a part of the program, students will meet with NRC mentors regularly. Once they turn 16, they can register for NRC’s Registered Nursing Assistant course at no cost. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to pursue employment at Northfield Retirement Community.

NRC President and CEO Kyle Nordine says, “NRC is committed to supporting Northfield youth. We hope to foster meaningful learning in an educational environment that is fun, hands-on and promotes student success.”



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900 Cannon Valley Drive • Northfield, MN 55057

For more than 45 years, NRC has provided high-quality housing and services specifically designed to meet the physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs of older adults.


 **Independent Living**

 **Care Center**

 **Assisted Living**

 **Short-term Care**

 **Memory Care**

Northfield Retirement Community is an Equal Opportunity Provider. 

COMING IN MAY:

The Convenings: Real Families. Real Choices. Real Life.

Save the date and plan to join broadcast journalist Cathy Wurzer and special guests on May 9, 2017, for an evening of music, storytelling and meaningful conversation about living and dying well. The event will be held at St. Dominic Church from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

The Convenings is based on a series of remarkable broadcast conversations Wurzer had with University of St. Thomas Dean Bruce Kramer, and their book, *We Know How This Ends: Living While Dying*. Kramer died in 2015 after living with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease).

The Convenings is presented by Honoring Choices Minnesota and the Bruce Kramer Collaborative, and is sponsored locally by the Northfield Advance Care Planning Advisory Council.

Save the Date

Cathy Wurzer
Tuesday,
May 9, 2017
6:30–8 P.M.



ST. DOMINIC CHURCH
104 Linden Street North, Northfield

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