

Caring Coalition of Metro NY Members

AARP

Alzheimer's Association
New York City Chapter

American Cancer Society
Brooklyn, NY

Friends & Relatives of the Institutionalized Aged
(FRIA)

Hospice Alliance of Downstate New York

Hospice and Palliative Care Association
of New York State

Metropolitan Funeral Directors Association

Metropolitan New York Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

National Organization for Empowering Caregivers

New Jersey Health Decisions

New Jersey Hospice and Palliative
Care Organization

New Jersey State Funeral Directors Association

New York Citizens Committee on Health
Care Decisions

UJA-Federation of New York

Veterans Health Administration, VISN 3

Westchester End-of-Life Coalition

*Supported by American Hospice Foundation and
Hospice Alliance of Downstate New York*

This printing is possible through the generous support of



Caring Coalition of Metro NY

Mission

Caring Coalition of Metro New York is an alliance of groups that share the common goal of expanding access to life care planning information, education and services. The coalition seeks to enhance networking opportunities, strengthen collaborative initiatives and promote life care planning for all residents of the Metro New York area.

Goals

1. Encourage conversations about issues that occur in life-threatening, progressive or advanced illness.
2. Enhance consumer understanding and participation in medical decision-making.
3. Inform the public about advance care planning.
4. Promote life care planning through education of the professional community.

For more information:

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Life Care Planning *... a beginning*

A health care crisis is no time to start a conversation

Most of us want our own wishes
to guide our health and medical care



Life Care Planning...a beginning, a **free publication** of the Caring Coalition of Metro NY, can help you start thinking realistically about your own needs and wishes and your healthcare choices.

Go to:
www.caringcoalitionmetrony.org
and click on Consumers

Life planning is all about making choices.

- Who can make decisions for me if I am not able to make them for myself?
- What sort of medical care do I want if I fall ill – and what care *don't* I want?
- What are my medical, residential, financial, and legal options?
- Who should know my needs and wishes?
- How do I ensure my wishes will be followed?

This guide can help you *start thinking* about life planning and your options. The “Where to Find Help” section tells you where to turn for further information on these subjects.

Making plans now, while you can weigh your choices carefully, can give you peace of mind and the assurance that your wishes will be respected.

Life Care Planning...a beginning will help you consider living and care options.



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Legal and Financial Planning

Sometimes the easiest place to begin life planning is with your estate and your finances. Legal documents can make decisions much easier in the event of illness.

Residential Options

Where will you live as you get older? What sort of care facility do you want? These are two of the most important questions facing aging Americans. The choices include care at home, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes.

Care at Home

You probably greatly cherish the comfort of your own home. Home-based care works best if you have close family members who can share the caregiving — a situation that sometimes lasts for years. After an illness or injury, most of us return home to recover, but we may still need services to help restore health and independence.

Many services are available in your home but not everyone can be safely managed at home. That's when adult day care, assisted living facilities or nursing homes may be necessary.

Comfort Care vs. Curative Care

All of us hope that medicine can provide a cure, or at least improve health. Yet in severe illness, after an accident, or with advanced age, it may no longer be possible to help us fully recover. At that point, continued treatment may extend life but may cause or prolong suffering.

That's when palliative care or hospice is needed. Both provide relief of distressing symptoms and support for the patient and caregivers. Both provide a team to help address physical and spiritual needs.

Hospice is a special way of caring for people who have advanced illness. Emphasizing the *quality* of life rather than the length of it, hospice offers comfort, rather than attempts at cure that may only add burdens for many patients. You don't have to go anywhere for hospice care – hospice comes to you. Hospice care is provided wherever a person lives.

Life Planning – A Deliberative Process

Life planning shouldn't be done in a hurry. It is important to understand the choices and decisions that must be made, know your rights in making such choices, and time to relay those choices to the person you choose.

Life Care Planning...a beginning leads you through a review of all the critical areas. It provides useful information on supportive organizations, health insurance assistance and other resources.

By considering these issues, and by discussing them with your health care provider, your clergy person, your family and loved ones, you can make the decisions that are best for you, and represent your own values, interests and beliefs.



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