

NEWS RELEASE

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ADVANCE CARE PLANNING – CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER

New Westminster —If you were severely injured or became ill and were unable to speak for yourself, would your loved ones know your values, priorities and care wishes? Or if it happened to a loved one, would you know what choices to make on his or her behalf?

Advance Care Planning (ACP) is about having conversations ahead of time to help plan for situations where you are not able to make health care decisions for yourself. But what does that conversation sound like? What issues need to be discussed, and what should we know that we don't know already? "On every shift, I encounter the struggles of families who have never had any Advance Care Planning conversations," says Dr. Joelle Bradley, a hospitalist at Royal Columbian and a leading advocate for ACP.

"I commend Dr. Bradley and all those involved in promoting awareness around advance care planning," says Health Minister Terry Lake. "British Columbia has the provincial End-of-Life Care Action Plan, designed to increase capacity for palliative and end-of-life care services, but the foundational plans for truly patient-centred care are made by individuals and family members before they are needed."

To raise awareness of this important issue and mark National Advance Care Planning Day (April 16th), a Shared Care Fraser Northwest Division project (a partnership of Doctors of BC and Ministry of Health) is hosting its first Advance Care Planning Fair on April 11th at Century House, New Westminster. "When family members have never talked about values and priorities; making medical decisions can cause great stress, guilt and turmoil," notes Bradley. The fair offers knowledgeable speakers sharing suggestions and strategies on how to talk to loved ones about their choices. Doctors will be available for table talks about what they can and can't do, as well as provide information about medical technologies and procedures.

Elaine Kelly, a former nurse who recently lost her husband Don says, "We were happy to talk about our values — formed over 55 years of marriage. In the end letting those values be known allowed Don to have the peaceful, calm death he wanted, naturally."

Advance Care Planning Fair, Saturday April 11th, 10 am to 2 pm, Century House, 620 Eighth Street, New Westminster; Information for the public: 604-669-7887

For more information about ACP see www.advancecareplanning.ca, [My Voice Guide](#), and a recently released Doctors of BC [Advance Care Policy Paper](#).

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Interview subjects

Dr. Bradley, one of the organizers is available for media interviews, as well as patients and families who have engaged in ACP (1) a family with a loved one facing a terminal illness, (2) a wife whose husband very recently died peacefully after embarking on ACP, and (3) a young New West woman who has had discussion with her family and recommends the process to others.



Divisions of Family Practice

A GPSC initiative

About the Shared Care Committee

Funding and support for this initiative is provided by Shared Care Committee, a joint Doctors of BC/Ministry of Health partnership. The Committee's support enables family and specialist physicians in the Fraser Northwest region to work together in their communities to improve patient care.

About the Divisions of Family Practice

The [Divisions of Family Practice](http://www.divisionsbc.ca) initiative is funded by a joint committee of the BC Ministry of Health and Doctors of BC. Throughout BC there are 34 divisions of family practice encompassing over 220 communities that work collaboratively with partners to enhance local patient care and improve professional satisfaction for physicians. www.divisionsbc.ca

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Divisions of Family Practice

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