



If you or someone you love is very ill... ask tough questions*

Ask Your Doctor...

- 1 Will you talk openly and candidly with me and my family about my illness?
- 2 What decisions will my family and I have to make, and what kinds of recommendations will you give to help us make these decisions?
- 3 What will you do if I have pain or other uncomfortable symptoms?
- 4 How will you help us find excellent professionals with special training when we need them (for example, medical, surgical and palliative care specialists, faith leader, social workers, etc.)?
- 5 Will you support me in getting hospice care?
- 6 If I reach a point where I am too sick to speak for myself, how will you make decisions about my care?
- 7 Will you still be available to me even when I'm sick and close to the end of my life?

Ask Your Health Care Agent...

- 1 Are you willing to be my health care agent and make medical decisions for me when I am no longer able?
- 2 Will you be able to make decisions for me if they are what I want? Even if they are not what you would choose for yourself?
- 3 Will you be able to ask the doctor for more information if you don't understand a treatment?
- 4 Will you be able to make a medical decision and change it later if the treatment is not having the intended benefit?

Ask Your Lawyer...

- 1 What sources of payment are available to cover long term care costs?
- 2 What long term care insurance benefits am I entitled to under my policy?
- 3 Will my advance directive be honored if I become ill in another state?
- 4 Will my advance directive be honored in an emergency?
- 5 When is a guardianship and/or conservatorship necessary and will a durable and financial attorney eliminate the need for one?

**These are samples of the kinds of questions we suggest that you ask. We are sure you will want to ask others as well. Before you have these conversations, take some time to think about what you want to know and make a list to help you remember.*

Ask a Loved One...

- 1 Will you seek out information about my disease, advance directives, your roles as caregivers, and what to expect as I near the end of life?
- 2 Will you respect my wants and needs, even if they're different from what they used to be, or if you don't agree with my choices?
- 3 If I cannot communicate for myself, will you speak for me to make sure that what I've asked for is done?
- 4 Will you care for yourself so that you are not exhausted from caring for me?
- 5 Will you stay with me even if the going gets rough?

Ask Your Spiritual Caregiver...

- 1 Will you understand and support my need for my spiritual self to be nourished and to grow, even as my physical being deteriorates?
- 2 If I have negative feelings like frustration, sadness, despair, anger at God or life, will you listen empathetically?
- 3 Will you continue to visit me even if I get very sick or can no longer respond?
- 4 Will you visit with my family and help them with their spiritual concerns about my illness?
- 5 Will you just sit and be with me, even if I don't want to or can no longer respond?

Ask Your Social Worker...

- 1 Will you listen to my thoughts and feelings about illness, medical care, life and death, and my loved ones with respect, confidentiality, and a non-judgmental approach?
- 2 Will you offer support to my loved ones and me when we need a trained professional to help us cope with crises and changes?
- 3 Will you educate my loved ones and me on resources (including financial and psychosocial), which can be helpful to us during this difficult time?
- 4 Will you meet me where I am at, and not force any unwanted discussion on me, if I am not ready?
- 5 Will you help my family after I am gone?



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