

Dying to know about your end of life care

5 August 2019 – Shining the spotlight on discussions about death and end of life care has become more of a focus for many health professionals over the years. All too often people shy away from these discussions until they have a health scare – and for thousands of Australians it's too late.

Marathon Health's Partners in Planning initiative aims to equip you with the tools to start conversations today, so when it comes to the end of your life your family is armed with guidance and knowledge regarding your end of life wishes.

Dr Andrew Lee, Partners in Planning Project Lead, encourages the community to start the discussions today. "We know it can be a tough conversation to have but it's a vital one. If we don't talk to our friends, family, carers, healthcare professionals or trusted people, then we leave our care to a stranger; someone who doesn't know our values."

While encouraging the conversation with trusted people, Dr Lee says it's also important to have these conversations often, and well in advance.

"Your wishes will probably change over time, so make sure to keep talking about what you want. There is no 'right time' to start these discussions. However, if you are over 65 and/or have a chronic illness it would be a good time to start thinking about how you want to be cared for in the advanced stages of your life."

To assist you and your family with end of life conversations, Partners in Planning has created and collated a range of valuable resources – which will all be available online shortly.

"Our Conversation Starter Cards support you to start the conversation, prompts you with the right questions to ask and have answered, and provides ways for you to record your preferences – and ideally complete an Advance Care Directive."

"If you want to start the conversation, start by thinking about your values – then reach out to family, friends, healthcare professionals or someone you trust and make sure they know as well."

Partners in Planning will be visiting Crookwell, Yass, Goulburn, Queanbeyan, Cooma, Batemans Bay and Bega at the start of August.

Key facts about Advance Care planning

- Almost 50% of people will not be able to make their own end-of-life medical decisions
- Fewer than 15% of Australians have documented their preferences in an Advance Care Directive
- Life typically ends after a chronic illness, not a sudden event
- Research shows that Advance Care Planning can reduce anxiety, depression and stress experienced by families, and that families are more likely to be satisfied and in agreement with their loved one's care



Bathurst Office:

102 Keppel St
PO Box 175
Bathurst
NSW 2795
T 02 6333 2800
F 02 6333 2899

Dubbo Office

106 Talbragar St
PO Box 1834
Dubbo
NSW 2830
T 02 6826 5200
F 02 6826 5299

Wagga Office

Suite 2, 32 Kincaid St
PO Box 138
Wagga Wagga
NSW 2650
T 02 6937 2000
F 02 6937 2099

Canberra Office

2 Phipps Close
Deakin
ACT 2600
T 02 6180 2824

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For more information about Partners in Planning, or to find out if a Partners in Planning event is happening in your area, contact Tara Apps, the Partners in Planning Community Engagement Officer – tara.apps@marathonhealth.com.au or 0408 916 756.

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About

Marathon Health delivers the best coordinated healthcare in country Australia. For more information about Marathon Health and its services please visit www.marathonhealth.com.au

Media contact:

Emily Roberts, Marketing and Communications Coordinator: 0428 924 523

