



The Conversations for Life® Programme Facilitated Community Engagement Around End of Life Conversations and Care

Background & Need

Although national campaigns and local hospices have extensive expertise and community connections around end of life awareness and care provision, engaging the wider (healthy, non-cancer, non-hospice, etc.) in local communities is required to shift the taboo subject of death and dying in an effective and efficient way.

Most adults have personal experience around death, dying, and bereavement. Leaders of community organisations are no exception. However, the varied backgrounds, professions and experience (personal or professional) must be given a common base upon which to lay the foundation for broader organisational and community engagement around such a complex and taboo subject in order to launch a successful initiative.

What The Conversations for Life® programme delivers

We deliver a proven model, approach and facilitation to support community agencies to act as community conveners, engaging cross-sector, multi-organisational support to launch or strengthen community-wide awareness and engagement initiatives around end of life conversations and care. Our trademarked Conversations for Life® programme can also offer communities a branded public and professional awareness initiative based on the stories of local people* including a designated website, and public and professional workshops linked to local, regional or national resources and initiatives. Via partnerships with sponsoring organisations and communities, the programme is delivered under our social enterprise. (See www.conversationsforlife.co.uk)

The Joint Project Includes

Step 1: Planning and Initial Leader Outreach (Via webinar or on-site)

Local hospice leaders/Identified Leads will receive the background and approach via one 1/2 day workshop/planning session, to identify and engage up to 30 community leaders (aligned organisations or associations) in their 'patch'. Outcomes of the day will prepare them for a 1.5 day facilitated event in their community to explore and unite leading organisations/associations in raising public awareness around death, dying and loss in their community.



Step 2: Community-Based Event Facilitation.

Our facilitation offers the context (both research based and experiential) for up to 30 community organisation leaders to understand the individual/personal, organisational, and community opportunities to align the already existing strengths or “assets” of their unique community to improve public and community awareness and engagement together.

Specifically, through community engagement, all participants will gain an understanding that death is a natural part of the human condition, and seek to raise awareness of issues and resources related to death and loss as part of improving support and care for people in their community. All planning, preparation, materials and facilitation included. (Venues and participant recruitment provided by designated Local Lead or hospice)

Step 3: A ½ day follow-up session will move from awareness to action around key themes and areas of interest for each community lead/organisation. (See below)

Key Outcomes of the Community Convener Day:

Although each community and event are unique, it is our experience that as a result of the pre-planning and 1 day facilitation, up to 30 participants in each area will have identified their commitment to participating in engaging in community-based initiative(s), and identified areas or opportunities to engage or connect further.

Outcomes include a greater awareness of:

- * The regional and national needs for raising awareness around death, dying and bereavement.
- * Their personal commitment or reason for raising this awareness.
- * The assets or strengths they or their organisation could play in a community-based initiative.
- * The role or roles their organisation could take as part of a community-wide initiative.
- * Assets and strengths that exist within their community.
- * The 3 things they will do personally or organisationally to move the outcomes of the strategy session forward in their community.

As a result of this preparation and 1-day session, the foundation is set for community support. Yet, there is not time in a single day for the larger group to move from awareness to action. We provide a ½ day session to move from ideas to action.

A Comprehensive Summary Report for Each Hospice/Province

A summary report and fully transcribed notes are provided following the 1-day session to the Hospice/Identified lead. This report will outline the key themes that emerged from the day and capture the key identified ‘assets’ identified. The report offers participants a



background document to take to their organisations as well as a foundation for the ½ day action session below.

A 1/2 Day Follow-Up Session-Moving Into Action Steps

In this ½ day follow-up session, we will quickly review the key themes or areas identified in the 1 day session and break into sub-groups to define tangible next steps based on participants self/organisational identified primary interests (i.e., public engagement around planning for future care, youth/school based projects, general awareness raising/PR, etc.) Groups will define needs and next steps for their focus area.

Community Led Engagement

- Based on self-identified priorities and interests, each community sets realistic next steps for their community
- Each community approaches this differently, according to assets and needs identified
- Leadership and sustainability is included in this plan

Outcomes Achieved To Date

Outcomes of this facilitated process in both rural and inner-city communities to date have been presented at:

- The 19th Congres du Palliative Care, Montreal, CA
- The 3rd Annual International Society for Advance Care Planning and End of Life Care, Chicago, USA

We have facilitators based in Northern England and Northwest US and are currently looking for international pilot sites in collaboration with aligned organisations/sponsors to expand the benefit of this work to communities internationally.

For further information or to discuss a programme or pilot for your area or region, including delivery fees contact:

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