

# How do you start the conversation?

## The Conversation Game®



# Primary objectives of using the Conversation Game<sup>®</sup> cards

- To facilitate the End-Of-Life “conversation”
  - The cards promote and guide the “conversation”, introducing new concepts that help individuals anticipate future challenges and choices
- To identify EOL wishes, values and preferences
  - The “conversation” replaces guessing and questions with confidence and knowledge to help patients/families identify what matters most
- To use EOL preferences to communicate & document choices and guide care
  - The ultimate goal is to ensure EOL wishes, values and preferences are understood and honored to provide quality of life at the end of life

# Background and History of the Conversation Game<sup>®</sup> cards

- The research based\* Conversation Game is the one tool that assists the public, staff and communities to start the conversation. It is nearly impossible to see the phrases on the cards and not have an opinion, a reaction, a response-all of which are conversation starters.
- The cards were developed originally by a group of hospice and palliative care organisations in the US as a grant funded project to assist people in starting (ACP) conversations. They have been reviewed and amended by the Lancaster University End of Life Care Observatory Peer Educators, used in the nationally endorsed Conversations for Life public health pilot, and in staff training sessions reaching more than 2000 staff. They are now are being used by staff across health and social care in the UK and abroad.
- Most recently, a study reported patient's preferred the use of the Conversation Game Cards to a list approach of statements of wishes: J Clin Oncol 33, 2015 (suppl 29S; abstr 44)
- \* Steihauser, et. al.

# What is the Conversation Game®?

- A deck of 36 cards similar to traditional playing cards in size and feel, available in large font (English).
- Informative phrases identified as important at the end of life are on each card.
- A “Wild” card encourages customised wishes, personal preferences and more “conversation”
- Basic instructions are included with packs; training materials, tips, scenarios and testimonials online.
- Card decks are available in multiple pack sets to use in pairs, for groups or large group conferences or events.

# Who Uses the Conversation Game®?

- Families, friends, surrogates and LPA's
  - Anyone supporting loved ones nearing EOL, those faced with complex family dynamics and healthcare agents responsible for representing others
- Estate planners, elder law attorneys and educators
  - Professionals teaching and guiding advanced planning at any life stage
- Religious and spiritual leaders
  - Priests, Chaplains, Rabbis, Pastors, Imams, etc.
- Medical professionals
  - Doctors, nurses, social workers and care staff
- Patients and residents
  - Ventilator and trauma patients, the terminally and critically ill and residents of assisted living, long term care or other such facilities



# Where is the Conversation Game® Used?

- Private homes and care facilities
- Community centers and places of worship
- Educational institutions and training centers
- Law offices and places of business
- Hospitals and clinics
- Hospices and Palliative Care centers
- Anywhere desired



# When is the Conversation Game<sup>®</sup> Used?

(See notes below for details)

- Before the need arises, any time
- At family meetings and gatherings with friends
- In End-Of-Life trainings and seminars
- Prior to filling out an Advance Directive or PPC form
- Upon diagnosis of life threatening illnesses
- After serious accidents

# Why the Conversation Game® Cards Work

- Educational
  - Introduce new concepts, talking points and thought-provoking ideas for visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners
- Flexible
  - Used in many places and many ways depending on personal preferences, abilities and circumstances
- Simple and non-threatening
  - Easy to read, basic language, short phrases, concise concepts, require no skills, technology or electricity and they are not a legal document
- Wild card and open ended phrases
  - The Wild Card encourages personal wishes to be explored and expressed, phrases allow for broad interpretation and introspection
- Familiar and comforting format
  - Cards are familiar and tangible, keeping hands and eyes busy if emotions are high, can also encourage eye contact and conversation



# Conversation Game<sup>®</sup>

## Sorting Options

(See notes below for details)

- Sorting cards into 3 piles
  - Least, somewhat and most important cards
    - Rank top 10 in the most important pile, discuss top 3 or more
- Most important theme
  - Pick the most important of 6 themes, rank and discuss
    - Pick the next most important theme, rank, discuss and repeat
- Most important card “Quick Pick”
  - In large groups or when time is limited
    - Pick the most important card, have participants share and discuss

# Conversation Game® Sorting Options

## “The Guessing Game”

(See notes below for details)

- Sorting for someone who can sort for them self
  - Never assume you know what they want
- Sorting for them correctly
  - Getting it right can be so validating
- Sorting for them incorrectly
  - Getting it wrong can be so valuable



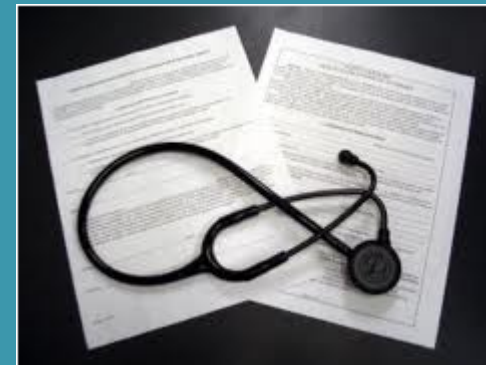
# Facilitating the Conversation

(See notes below for details)

- Active listening
  - Validate feelings, re-state or paraphrase their comments and feed back their concerns as questions
- Gentle probing
  - Ask questions to confirm understanding, encourage them to expand on their comments and clarify their meaning
- Modeling the conversation
  - Show how to sort the cards, talk about why certain cards are important to you, verbalize feelings and think out loud

# Additional Tools to Capture & Document EOL Wishes and Preferences

- PPC
- Advance Directives
- PPC
- DNAR/Others



# The Conversation Game<sup>®</sup> Online

- The Conversation Game is available for purchase at:

[www.conversationsforlife.co.uk](http://www.conversationsforlife.co.uk)

Testimonials, case examples and training can be found on our website as well.

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