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Advance Care Planning – Integral to Healthy Aging

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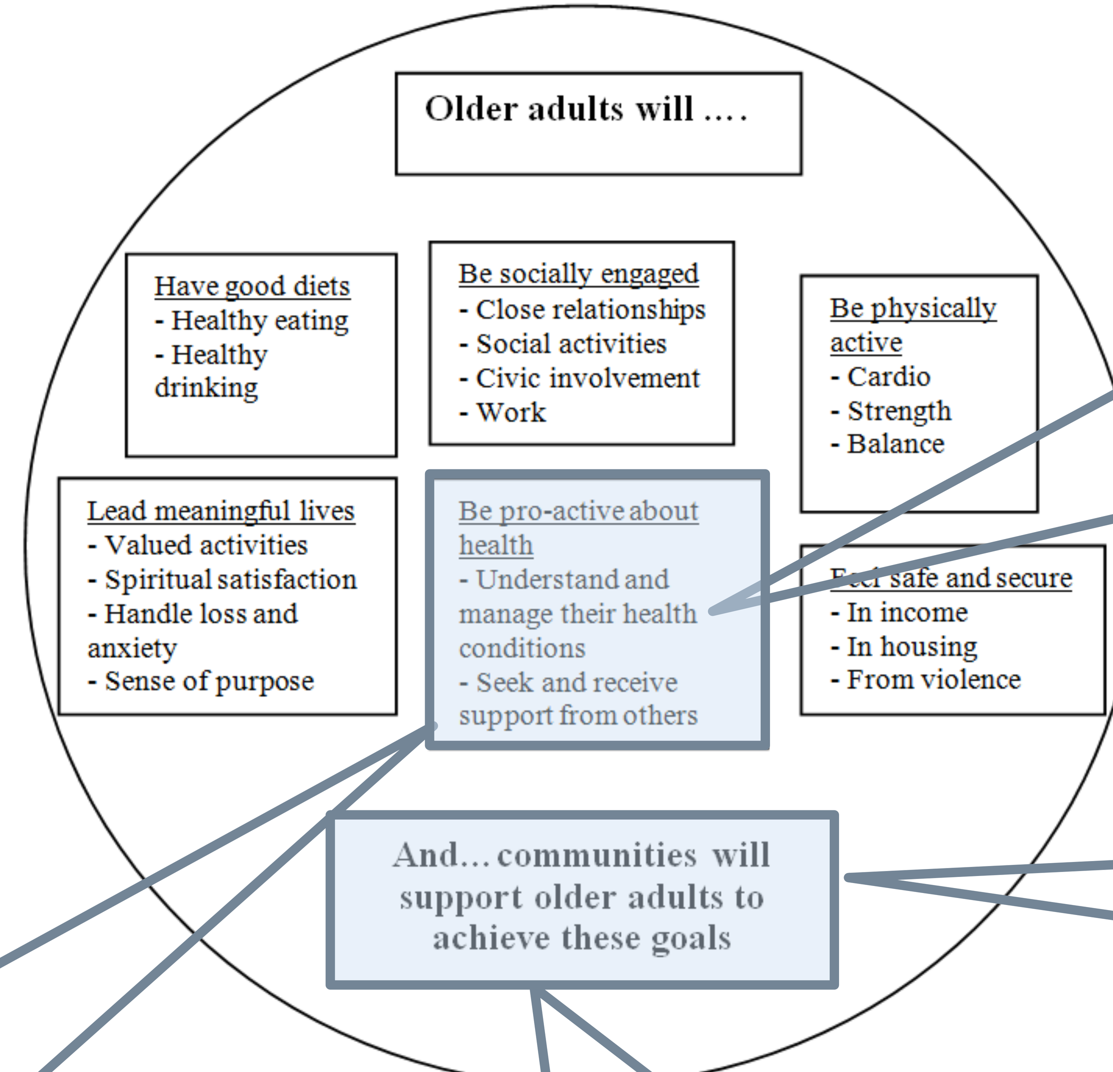
Rationale

- Unexpected death is unlikely for older Americans
  - 7:10 deaths in the U.S. due to chronic illness[3]
- Americans have thought about the end of life:[8]
  - 57% U.S. adults indicate they would tell their doctors to stop treatment if they had an incurable disease.
  - 35% would tell their doctors to do everything.
- Yet few have prepared an Advance Directive[4]
  - 28% receiving Home Health Care
  - Disproportionately small numbers among Blacks (12%) and Hispanics (12%)
- Specifying wishes gives us control at a time when we have little control
  - Patient designated proxies incorrectly predict patient preferences one-third of the time[1]

Figure 1: Ingredients of Healthy Aging[6]



Make Plans with a Physician's Help:

- ✓ "What can I expect from this illness…6 months…1 year…5 years from now?"[9]
- ✓ "What can I expect will improve or not improve if I choose this course of treatment?"[9]
- ✓ "What can I expect if I choose to do nothing?"[9]

Supportive National Policy

Patient Self-Determination Act[2]

Patients have a right to:

- Make decisions about their own care;
- Refuse care;
- Make advanced directives about their care.

Help Others Understand Your Wishes

The Five Wishes:[5]

1. This is the person I want to make care decisions for me when I can't:
2. These are the kinds of medical treatments I want or don't want when I am:
   - Unable to take food by mouth
   - In a coma and not expected to wake up
3. I want these things to help keep me comfortable…
4. This is how I want people to treat me:
   - Prayers
   - Visits
5. I want my loved ones to know…

Massachusetts Communities Respecting Your Wishes in All Settings…Home, Ambulance, Hospital, Long-Term Care

Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST)[7]

- ✓ Standardized Form Designating Patient Preferences as a Medical Order for:
  - Emergency Care on Page 1
  - Long-term Life Sustaining Procedures on Page 2
- ✓ Now also in Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Portuguese

References

[1] Agency for Healthcare Research *(2003)* Advance Care Planning, Preferences for Care at the End of Life, *Research in Action* http://www.ahrq.gov/research/findings/factsheets/aging/endliferia/index.html.
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[4] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2011) Use of Advance Directives in Long-term Care Populations. *NCHS Data Brief no. 54.*
[5] Ekstein, D.; Mullener, B. (2010) A Couple's Advance Directive Interview Using the Five Wishes. *The Family Journal* 18:1:66-69.
[6] Leutz, W., Schneider, N., Newton, B. M., & Newton, M. A. (2012). Massachusets Healthy Aging Collaborative.
[7] Massachusetts Department of Public Health (2012) Circular Letter DHCQ 12-3-560.
[8] Pew Research Religion and Public Life Project (2013) Views on End of Life Medical Treatments http://www.pewforum.org/2013/11/21/views-on-end-of-life-medical-treatments/.
[9] The Conversation Project and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (2013) "How to Talk to Your Doctor" www.theconversationproject.org.