



American Cancer Society Circle Of LifeSM
Cancer Education and Wellness for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities

Nearing the End of Life

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Public Health Advisor*

Revised: May 1, 2018



Artwork courtesy of Jason Edwards, J. Morgan Photography, Marcine Quenzer, Matt Atkinson, and Mary Ruth Barnes

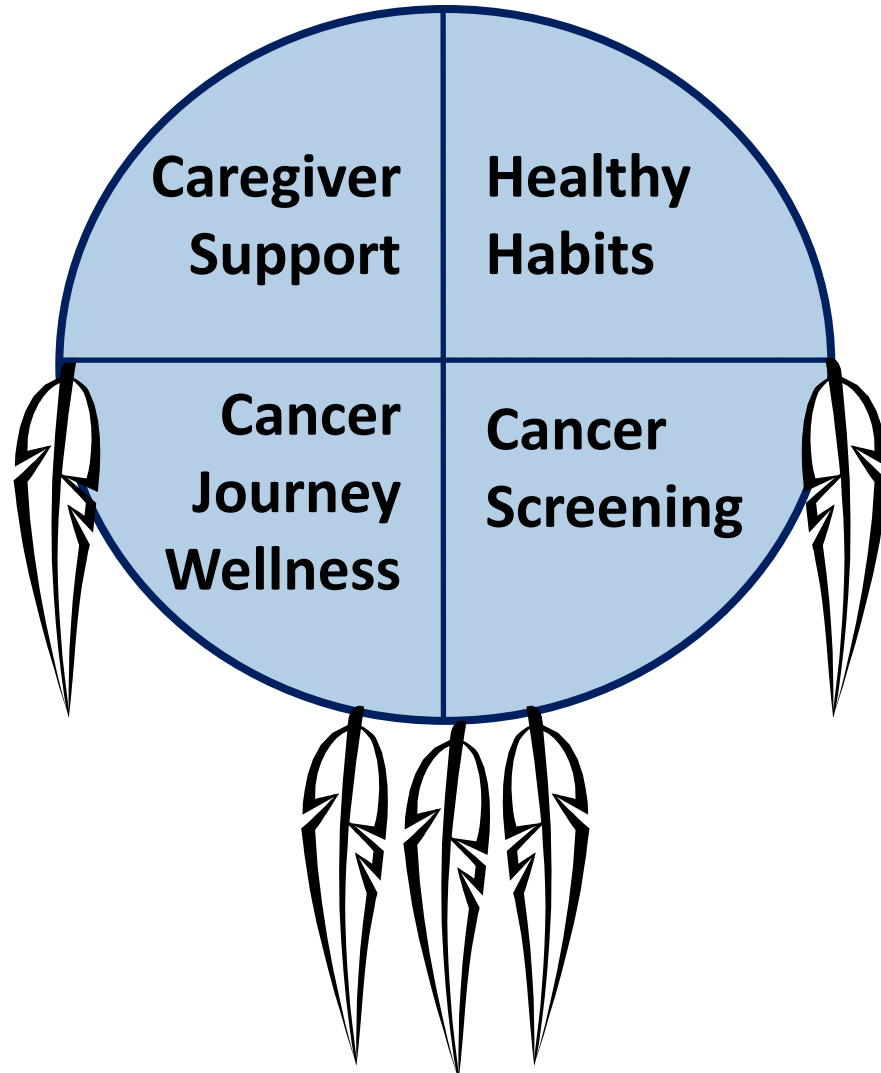
Wellness in Our Communities



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What is the Circle Of LifeSM Initiative?



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To Discuss ...

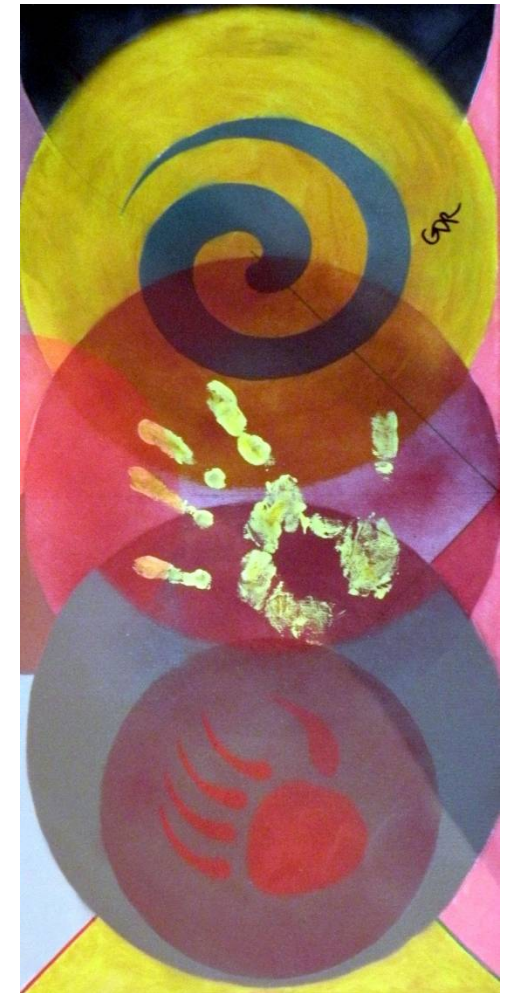
- How do health care providers assess advanced cancer?
- The legal issues that should be addressed at the end of life
- How are someone's health care wishes honored legally?
- What is the grieving process?

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- How much cancer is present?
- How far has the cancer spread?
- Can the cancer be cured?
- How much has the cancer affected the person's physical condition?



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Reference: www.cancer.org

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- Some people do not want aggressive cancer treatment.
- Some people want to get treatment as long as there is even a small chance it may help.
- Some people want to stay at home, and others choose not to.



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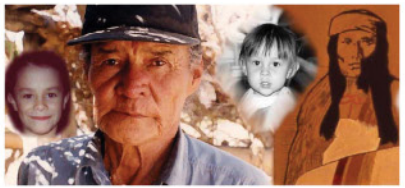
Advance directives can be any of these:

- Living will
- Health care power of attorney
- Letter of Instructions
- Five Wishes form
- Do not resuscitate orders

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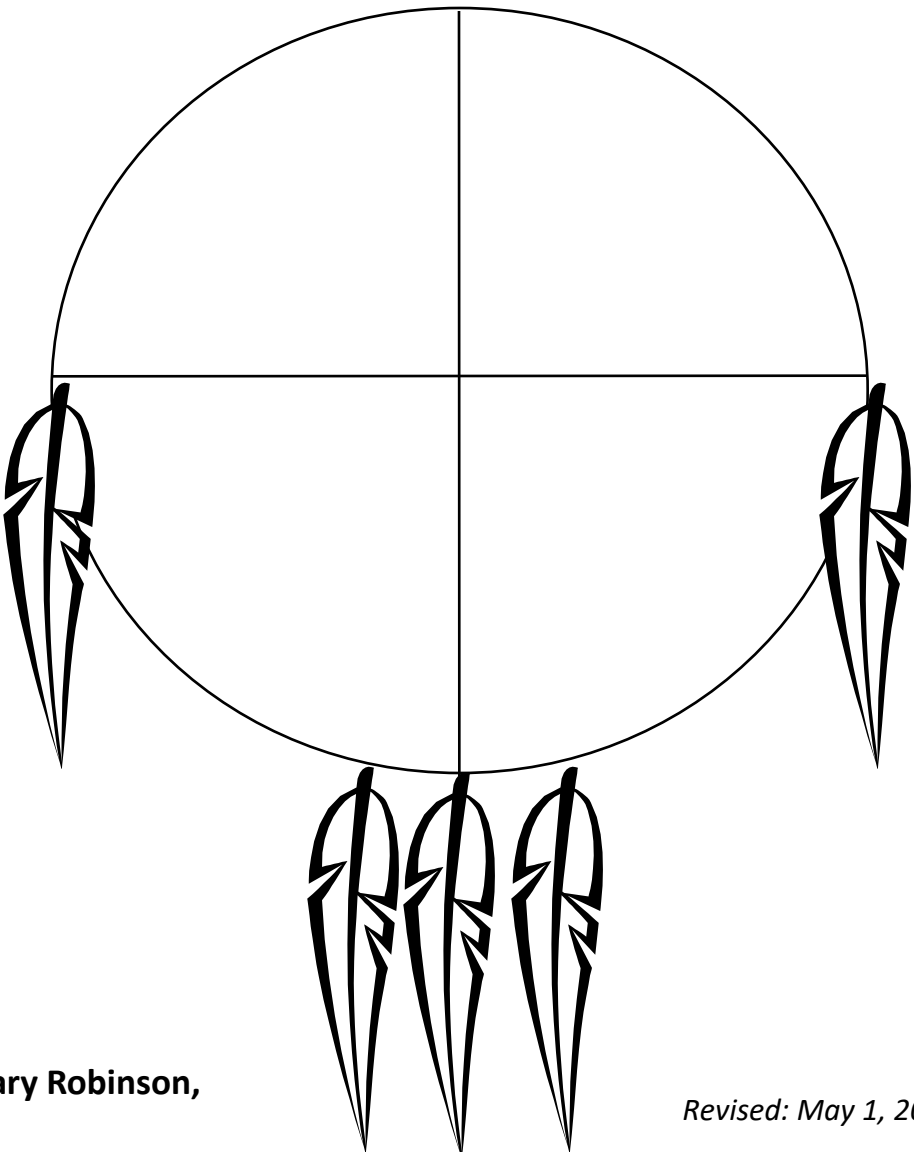
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Whom do you want to make decisions for you when you are no longer able to?

What kind of lifesaving measures do you want to have?



As you reach the end of your life, do you want to die at home? Would you like hospice care?

After you die are you willing – or unwilling – to donate your organs or tissues to others who need them to live?

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Steps toward Writing a Will

- *Decide on an executor.*
- *Choose a guardian for children.*
- *Identify beneficiaries.*
- *List assets.*
- *Who gets what?*



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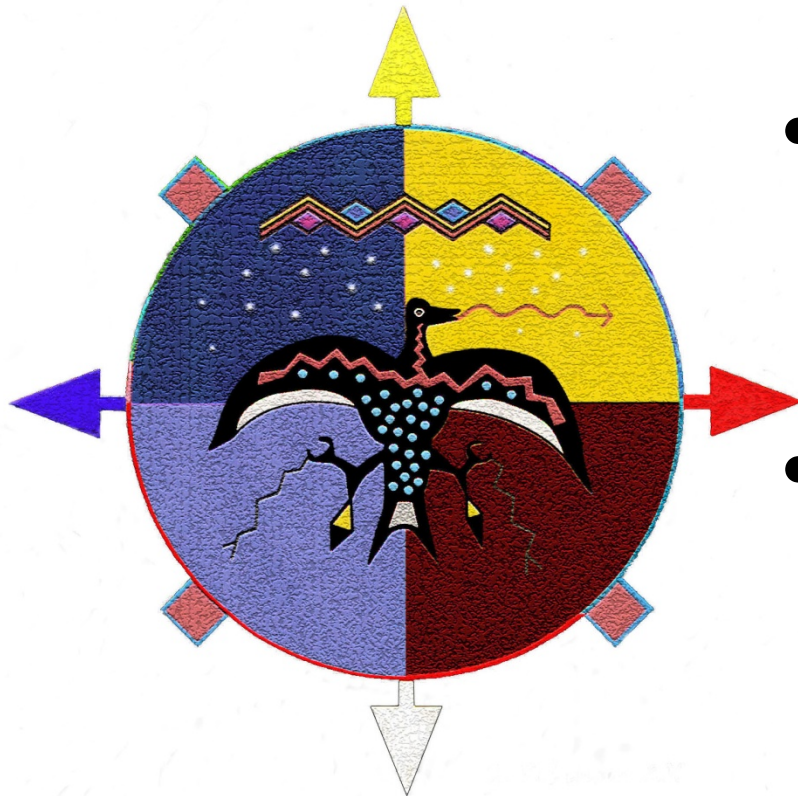
- Profound weakness and needing help with nearly everything
- Less and less interest in food
- Dozing or sleeping much of the time or trouble waking up
- Anxiety, fear, restlessness, and loneliness that may be worse at night
- Confusion about time, place, or people



- Hospice is a program designed to give supportive care near the end of life.
- Hospice care is given when treatment aimed at a cure is no longer helping someone.
- A person can only enter hospice if they are expected to live about six months or less if the illness runs its usual course.

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- Have a plan for what to do after death as this is a very emotional time.
- Encourage families and friends to express their love and appreciation.
- Love the person as they are making their transition, and respect their needs.

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- It is important that family and friends be supported during their grieving process.
- The way each person grieves for a loved one will be different.



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- When a person loses someone important to them, they go through a normal process called grieving.
- Grieving is natural and should be expected.
- Over time, grieving can allow the person to accept and understand their loss.
- Grieving involves feeling many different emotions over time.

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“I encourage people who are terminal with cancer to tell your family about it. To tell your children, to tell your aunts, your sisters, your mom and dad whomever. Give your family an opportunity to come and help you if they can. Sometimes they have strange reaction to that kind of information, but tell them.”

– *CeCe Whitewolf, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla breast cancer survivor*

(Clark, R., (Producer) & Whitewolf, C. (Artist). (2007). *Survivor Video Vignettes: Let Others Help You*. [Web]. Retrieved from <http://www.natamcancer.org/vignettes/cc5-palliative.html>)

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- Children often think they caused a death by being angry with or thinking bad thoughts about someone.
- Children worry about what will happen to them after they lose someone.
- Children may feel left out or less valued if they are not allowed to go to funerals and ceremonies for their loved ones.



- The American Cancer Society provides cancer information, day-to-day help, and emotional support.
- You can call 1-800-227-2345 to speak with a trained American Cancer Society cancer information specialist.



- People have the right to determine what types of treatment they want and when they want to stop treatment.
- Encourage family and friends to take time to talk to the person who is ill to receive any life lessons or stories they may want to pass on.
- Encourage family members to talk to someone if they are experiencing ongoing sadness and anger.



- Questions?
- Thank you for participating!





cancer.org | 1.800.227.2345

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