

Partners in Caring

End-of-life seminar for faith leaders

Partners in Caring Toolkit

How to host a seminar for faith leaders on end of life and advance care planning

Seriously ill and dying individuals and their families often turn to faith communities for support during their illness. Yet faith leaders may feel unprepared to care for people coping with complex medical, ethical, and interpersonal issues that often surround a person's last days. A survey conducted by the Duke Institute on Care at the End of Life found that less than 60% of clergy describe themselves as "very comfortable" when they visit facing serious illness or death.

With the support of the Archstone Foundation, the Coalition for Compassionate Care of California (CCCC) has developed this Toolkit to help local end-of-life and POLST coalitions connect with faith leaders in their communities and provide the information and skills to help them support members of their congregations who are seriously ill and their families and loved ones.

Background

In 2002, the Center for Healthcare Decisions (CHCD) developed the original Partners in Caring seminar for faith leaders in the Sacramento region. Since that time, CHCD has hosted more than 10 seminars reaching more than 300 faith leaders. With help from CHCD, CCCC has developed a model curriculum for the seminar and worked with five local coalitions to pilot it in their communities. Based on their feedback, CCCC put together this toolkit that maps out how a local coalition can host a successful seminar – from the initial planning phase, to outreach, to program content and evaluation.

How to use the Toolkit

The toolkit contains step-by-step information for local coalitions on planning and publicizing a faith leader seminar, a sample agenda, model presentations and readings, and suggested content for a resource binder. It is based on CHCD's years of experience hosting these seminars as well as feedback from the local coalitions that piloted the curriculum.

One thing that we learned putting this together is that every community is different – and one size does not fit all. Use the Toolkit as a starting point, and modify it to fit your community's needs. We also want to highlight the importance of a planning committee that includes, if possible, several people who are active in faith communities in your area. They can help open doors as well as provide valuable input into your outreach and program design.

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We look forward to hearing from those who use the Toolkit – to learn more about what works and what needs improvement. Please feel free to contact us with questions and suggestions.

About the Coalition for Compassionate Care of California

CCCC is a statewide collaborative of organizations and individuals representing healthcare providers, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, hospices, consumers, and state agencies that promotes high-quality, compassionate care for all Californians who are seriously ill or approaching the end of life.

CCCC is working to make conversations about end of life and advance care planning (ACP) a normal part of everyday life – this includes conversations around the kitchen table, at the water cooler at work, and at places of worship.

Visit CoalitionCCC.org to find out more about becoming part of a statewide movement to improve care for all seriously ill Californians.

Coalition for Compassionate Care of California

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