2-4-2011

Advance Directives and End-of-Life Care: Completion, Conversations, and Concerns of Burlington Housing Authority Residents

Katherine Clark
Gwendolyn Fitz-Gerald
Claire Frost
Benjamin Goldstein
Eric Kalivoda

See next page for additional authors

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Recommended Citation
Clark, Katherine; Fitz-Gerald, Gwendolyn; Frost, Claire; Goldstein, Benjamin; Kalivoda, Eric; Persing, Sarah; Ray, Damian; Russell, Sarah; Rutenbeck, Claire; and Davis, Gerald, "Advance Directives and End-of-Life Care: Completion, Conversations, and Concerns of Burlington Housing Authority Residents" (2011). Public Health Projects, 2008-present. Book 49.
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Authors
Katherine Clark, Gwendolyn Fitz-Gerald, Claire Frost, Benjamin Goldstein, Eric Kalivoda, Sarah Persing, Damian Ray, Sarah Russell, Claire Rutenbeck, and Gerald Davis
Discussion and Conclusions

• About 1/3 of participants had already completed an Advance Directive; the majority had not.
• The most common barriers to Advance Directive completion were lack of knowledge about Advance Directives, being too busy to fill one out, and that health care providers had not broached the subject. Only 16% of respondents had ever discussed end-of-life care with their health care provider, and 26% reported that a conversation with their doctor would be helpful for their advance care planning.
• 35% of participants had never had an end-of-life care conversation while an additional 30% had not discussed it in the past year.
• 35% of respondents indicated that more information about Advanced Directives would help them and 26% requested educational sessions.
• The vast majority of participants have significant worries about end-of-life care regardless of whether they are having end-of-life conversations.
• The results of our survey may not be representative of the surveyed population due to a low response rate, n= 43, and possible selection bias such that people with some previous knowledge of Advance Directives may have been more likely to fill out the survey distributed on this topic.

Lessons Learned
• Barriers to completing Advance Directives in this population are largely due to a lack of knowledge about what Advance Directives are.
• Providing information about Advance Directives should be the responsibility of health care professionals.
• Conversations about end-of-life care initiated by health care providers have the potential to help improve Advance Directive completion rates.

References