

To be used by a member of the ACP team

# First Steps<sup>®</sup> ACP Introduction Guide

## Getting Started: Explore and Create a Follow-Up Plan

### The invitation

*"I am a member of the advance care planning team. I help individuals and their families learn how to plan for future healthcare decisions. I'd like to help you get started today. I have a few questions for you."*

### 1. Explore understanding of ACP

*"You may have received information about advance care planning. Tell me what you understand about this type of planning."*

**Advance Care Planning:** Advance care planning is for all adults. It is thinking and talking about future healthcare decisions if you had a sudden event, like a car accident or illness, and could not make your own decisions. A person close to you would need to make choices for you. We call this person a healthcare agent. This conversation will help your agent understand your goals and values. This will help him or her to make decisions for you, if needed.

*"What fears or concerns do you have about this planning?"*

### 2. Choose a healthcare agent

*"One of the most important decisions we encourage people to make is choosing your healthcare agent."*

*"This person would make decisions for you in the future if you could not make your own decisions. There are four qualities you should look for. A healthcare agent should be willing to:*

- Accept this role,
- Talk with you about your goals, values, and preferences,
- Follow your decisions (even if he or she does not agree with them), and
- Make decisions in difficult moments (e.g., differing opinions; crisis situations).

*Do you know anyone who could do this?"*

### 3. Make recommendations for continuing the ACP conversation

- Provide information and local resources (e.g., ACP education materials, group ACP classes, online tutorials, brochures)
- Schedule a return appointment to include the healthcare agent
- Create a list of questions for physician
- Provide copy of advance directive document if appropriate

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