

## Useful questions/phrases to use in difficult conversations

### Advance care planning

- Can you tell me about your current illness and how you're feeling?
- What is your understanding of what is happening to you?
- What worries you most about your illness?
- What do you see happening with your illness over the next few months?
- Could you tell me what the most important things are to you at the moment?
- What are your thoughts about the future? How do you see things going?
- What are your main concerns/worries/fears about the future?
- What do you hope for?
- In thinking about the future, have you thought about where you would prefer to be cared for as your illness gets worse?
- It would be good to discuss what kind of medical you would want if you should get sick again. How do you feel about talking about this?
- What do you want/not want around treatment and care in the future
- What are your goals if your condition worsens?
- Who is important in your life? what role do you want them to play at the end of your life?
- Who do you want to say goodbye to and how?
- What is working/not working in your life, what do you want to change?
- What would you still like to experience/achieve?
- What are your important memories? How would you like to be remembered?
- What decisions need to be made and how do you want to be involved?
- We've talked about a lot of important things today, would it be ok if I wrote this down so we have a record of these?

### Person centred questions

- What worries you most about your illness?
- What's the most important issue in your life right now?
- What helps you keep going?
- What is helping most at the moment?
- What is your greatest problem?
- Is there anyone you are especially worried about?

### Religion and spirituality

- How do you make sense of what is going on with you?
- What do you enjoy doing?
- What is important for us to know about your faith or religion?
- Has being ill made any difference to what you believe in?
- What do I need to know about you to help me care for you?
- How have you coped with difficulties in the past?

- What would give you the most comfort as your life draws to a close?
- Are there things bothering you, that you find yourself dwelling on?

### **Breaking bad news**

- Your father is very ill. Even with the very best treatment it is possible he may not survive
- I am sorry. I wish I could give you some other news, but treatments are not working. We need to consider what to do next.
- We have done everything possible to allow your father to survive, All I can do at this point is to allow him to die with as much comfort and dignity as possible and to help you to deal with the terrible loss.

### **DNACPR**

- We have talked about many things relating to your illness, but there is still something I would like to talk to you about. Have you thought about what might happen if you were to collapse and your heart were to stop?
- Have you ever thought about what might happen when, as a natural consequence to the end of your life, your heart stops. Would you want anyone to make any attempt to restart your heart?
- Tell me what you understand about the process of resuscitation, have you seen anyone resuscitated apart from on the TV?
- Can I tell you what it would mean if it happened here
- Can I tell you why I think it wouldn't be right for you
- Do you understand we would only be attempting, there is no guarantee
- The chances of CPR working are very low and it would not allow your father to survive. It would be better to keep your father comfortable and allow a natural and dignified death.