

**Lunch & Learn Webinar:
Health Literacy in
Older Adults**


PRESENTED BY
Dr. Peggy L. Determeyer, PhD, MDiv, MBA, BCC, HEC-C
McCoe Fellow and Director, CARES
Hope and Healing Center & Institute

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Gateway to Hope University (GTHU)

We offer evidence-based mental and behavioral health training, educational resources, and ongoing support to individuals, faith communities, schools, and workplaces.

We developed GTHU to provide you with the training needed to recognize, refer, relate, and effectively and compassionately respond to those in mental distress.



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Mental Health Coach Training

- Evidence-based training incorporating ongoing research and feedback from GTHU network of Mental Health Coaches.
- Learn essential information, skills, practical scenarios, and actionable steps to compassionately respond to those in mental distress.
- Deepen your knowledge and response skills through our Specialization Trainings:
 - Addiction and Behavioral Health Disorders
 - Child and Adolescent Mental Health
 - Aging and Elder Care
 - Trauma



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Mental Health Coach Benefits

- Personalized Learning Profile
- Access to Mental Health Coach forum to connect with other Mental Health Coaches
- Access to Directory of Community Resources map
- Certification at the end of Mental Health Coach Training
- Mental Health Coach meetings and online events



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Introduction

- Understand health literacy and influences
- Recognize credible resources
- Empower discussions with health professionals
- Define critical terminology relevant to personalized medical decision-making
- Identify questions for providers and yourself

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Health Literacy

The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions

Institute of Medicine, 2004

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Skills Needed for Health Literacy

- Promote and protect health and prevent disease
- Understand, interpret, and analyze health information
- Apply health information over a variety of situations
- Navigate the healthcare system
- Participate actively with healthcare workers

Institute of Medicine, 2004



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Results of Poor Health Literacy

- More hospitalizations
- Higher healthcare costs
- Low preventive actions
- Poor self-management of chronic conditions
- Poor ability to interpret health messages
- Poor disease outcomes, some due to delayed treatment
- High mortality

Urstadt et al, 2022, and Coughlin et al, 2020



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Sources of Health Information

- Websites (Web MD, Mayo Clinic, etc.)
- Federal government (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Centers for Disease Control, National Institute on Aging, etc.)
- Nonprofit organizations (American Heart Association, Alzheimer’s Association, American Cancer Society)
- Insurance companies
- Healthcare providers

Keenan et al, 2024



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Challenges to Communications

- Providing information to health care practitioners
- Language subjectivity from physicians and nurses
- Specialized terminology
- Determining patient/family goals



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Basis for Personal Goals of Care

- Medical Indications
 - What is the prognosis (likely outcome)?
 - What can be done?
- Values: How do I make meaning?
- Treatment Goals and Plans: What are the risks and benefits?
- Emotional Support: Who is the sojourner?



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Language Describing Goals of Care

- I want to have the best care possible until the day that I die
- I want to live meaningfully
- I want to remain independent
- I want to establish boundaries
- I would like to die...with dignity...at home...???



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Important Terminology

- Autonomy
- Informed Consent
- Intensive Care Unit (ICU)
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) Order
- Advance Directives
- Terminal Illness
- Irreversible Illness
- Heroic Measures
- “Do Everything”
- Palliative Care
- Comfort Care
- Hospice



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Overriding Questions

- What are my life goals?
- What are my healthcare goals?



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Decision-Making Capacity

- Implies the ability to understand and make own decision
- Person must
 - Understand information
 - Use the information rationally
 - Appreciate the consequences
 - Come to a reasonable decision for themselves
 - Communicate choices before hospitalization



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Role of Advance Directives

- Everyone has a personal sense of
 - Who we are
 - What we like to do
 - Control we like to have
 - Goals we have
 - Things for which we hope
- Advance Directives Act empowers us to exercise these goals.



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Document	Purpose	Requirement(s)
Medical Power of Attorney (MPOA)	Designate decision-maker	Two witnesses, no notary; copies acceptable
Directive to Physicians (Living Will)	Designate choices in case of terminal or irreversible condition	Two witnesses, no notary; copies acceptable
Declaration for Mental Health Treatment	Make decisions in advance about mental health treatment: psychoactive medication, convulsive therapy, and emergency mental health treatment.	Two witnesses, no notary; copies acceptable
Out-of-Hospital Do Not Resuscitate (OOH/DNR)	Does not require emergency response personnel to perform CPR on terminally ill individual	Form signed by physician; keep with individual



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Questions for the Doctor When Diagnosed with Chronic or Life-Limiting Illness

- Can you sketch the usual trajectory of my/my loved one's illness?
- What do you hope the treatment will do for me/my loved one? How will it make me/my loved one feel?
- What are the pros, cons, and alternatives of the proposed treatment?
- What is it like to die of this disease, and how can medicine ease the symptoms?
- Will you still be my/my loved one's doctor if I decide to opt for strictly palliative care?
- When do patients with my disease benefit most from enrolling in hospice?



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Questions for Yourself When Diagnosed with Chronic or Life-Limiting Illness

- What activities or capacities make my/my loved one's life worth living?
- What are my/my loved one's greatest fears and regrets?
- Given that time may be short, how do I/we want to spend it?



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Decision-Making and Chronic or Life-Limiting Illnesses

- Understand the benefit, burden and risk of each care option.
- What would proceeding with the intervention likely do to further their personal goals, interests, lifestyle, comfort, longevity, anxiety reduction, etc.?
- What kinds of decisions have they made in the past that were of similar significance/magnitude/importance to you or your loved one?



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Conclusion

- Learn critical terms related to primary diagnoses
- Accompany aging family members to appointments or ask to be included via telephone
- Ask questions of healthcare providers
- Take notes
- Research information on reputable websites
- If questions are not addressed, get second opinion



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References

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Dr. Peggy Determeyer
 McGee Fellow
 Director, HHCI CARES
 pdetermeyer@hhci.org
 346-335-8623



Rabbi Seth Stander
 Community Aging Specialist, HHCI CARES
 sstander@hhci.org
 346-335-8627

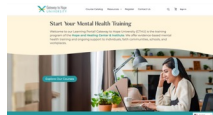


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GTHU Websites



GatewaytoHopeUniversity.org



Learn.GTHU.org



MischerBehavioralHealth.org



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