

Community Read

Have the town library sponsor a community read. Similar to a book club, bring people together through a common story. Choose a book that discusses end-of-life decision issues and make it easily available in the library. Hold events at the library to discuss the book and further the discussion regarding end-of-life choices. Provide educational materials to help people bring the discussion home.

Partner with the local library – Work with the town library to organize a community read. See if they have a facility where they may be able to host group meetings.

Choose a book – Select a book that discusses end-of-life theme(s). Choose something that people will be interested in reading and discussing as a group. You may consider separating it by age group so as to appeal to more people. For example, you may choose a book for a group of seniors related to end-of-life, and perhaps chose a different book for a group of (young) adults related to giving care. Once the books are chosen, make them available at the library. Make sure they are front and center. Some good book examples include:

Being Mortal, Atul Gawande

Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant, Roz Chast

The Conversation: A Revolutionary Plan for End-of-Life Care, Angelo Volandes

Establish a meeting schedule – Decide when and how often the group will meet. Prepare an agenda to be distributed upon signing up for the program.

Get the word out – Announce the community read and chosen book in local press. Send out flyers, put up posters and spread the word over social media. Make sure announcements are made among your coalition leaders and to their respective groups.

Prepare the materials – Collect materials that will be given to participants during the program. Create a list of discussion questions related to the book. Have them sent out a few days before each meeting so they are prepared. Have informational packets containing information regarding advance care planning (articles, Five Wishes, step-by-step guide on creating documents, list of local resources and people who can assist, etc.). Discuss these materials at the meeting and encourage them to have the conversation at home.

Host a finale event – You may consider inviting a guest speaker to a few of your meetings or to a finale event. He or she will be able to facilitate a discussion about advanced care planning and act as an expert if anybody has specific questions regarding the process. This event can serve as a fun culmination to the read. You can offer snacks and refreshments.