

# CONVERSATION OF YOUR LIFE TASK FORCE TOOLKIT





## **Background**

Most New Jerseyans want to die at home surrounded by their loved ones. But the reality is most New Jerseyans die in the hospital, surrounded by strangers. We also know that when people have conversations about their end-of-life choices they choose comfort care or limited interventions over extreme interventions. However most people receive extreme life-saving measures in the hospital, even when they are not wanted.

A 2016 poll conducted by the Quality Institute and the Rutgers Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling found that 61 percent of New Jersey adults are comfortable with the idea of aging and have thought about their wishes for medical treatment near the end-of-life, yet 60 percent of New Jersey adults have no written documents expressing their wishes for the end-of-life. According to a 2015 Kaiser Family Foundation poll, 89 percent of people surveyed said providers should discuss how to navigate end-of-life decisions with patients, but only 17 percent of people had those talks with providers. We have learned from these statistics that the public is comfortable with discussing end-of-life issues, however very few people are making plans and many are not aware of important end-of-life care options or advance care planning documents.

## **Overview**

Conversation of Your Life (COYL) is a program of the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute's Mayors Wellness Campaign. The program aims to bring advance care planning conversations to New Jersey communities. COYL is generously funded by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey. As a task force member, you are part of an elite group of individuals organizing to help patients and their families better understand

the benefits of advance care planning and the choices available to them. As a result of your work, patients and their families will feel empowered to implement the action steps needed to honor their end-of-life care wishes.

In this document you will find valuable tools and resources to help guide community programming including:

- Press release template
- Town proclamation template
- COYL activities crosswalk
- Movie screening flyer template
- Community read flyer template
- Game night flyer template
- Event sign in sheet
- Exit survey for attendees

## **Goal**

Our goal is for more individuals in New Jersey to engage in fruitful dialogue – the Conversation of Your Life – to let their family, friends, or doctors understand and respect their end-of-life wishes through advance care planning. We aim to spark a community culture change so that speaking openly about the end-of-life is normal and encouraged.

After successfully piloting Conversation of Your life in Tenafly, Princeton, and Gloucester Township in 2015, the Mayors Wellness Campaign expanded Conversation of Your Life into Bergen, Mercer, and Camden Counties in 2016. After a successful year of county-level programming, we are expanding Conversation of Your Life further into Somerset, Middlesex, Burlington, and Gloucester Counties in 2017. We conduct programming in 'community living rooms,' such as libraries and houses of worship. It is our goal to start this conversation in



settings where community members feel comfortable. Programming includes film screenings, book talks, game nights, panel discussions, and more. Each local program is supported by multiple local partners who share the goal of encouraging this important conversation.

**Statewide Steering Committee**

A statewide steering committee of subject matter experts on end of life care and advance care planning helped develop COYL programming and provides guidance for the program. The COYL Statewide Steering Committee includes:

- Aline Holmes, New Jersey Hospital Association
- Dr. Dave Barile, New Jersey Goals of Care
- Deborah Levine, New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute
- Don Pendley, Home Care & Hospice Association of New Jersey

- Dr. Eric Shaban, VITAS Healthcare
- Dr. Frank Urbano, AmeriHealth New Jersey
- Linda Schwimmer, New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute
- Loretta Kaes, Health Care Association of New Jersey
- Dr. Randy Krakauer, Aetna
- Ruth Charbonneau, New Jersey Department of Health
- Steven Wishart, VITAS Healthcare
- Dr. Terry Shlimbaum, Family Physician

**Contacts**

Deborah Levine, MPH.....  
 Director of Community Health  
 New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute  
 dlevine@njhcqi.org  
 609-452-5980



# Table of Contents

Section 1: Build Your Task Force.....6

    1.1 Pre-Task Force Planning

    1.2 Who Can Be a Task Force Member

    1.3 Task Force Roles

    1.4 Outreach

Section 2: How to Implement A Conversation of Your Life Program.....7

    2.1 Establish Program Goals

    2.2 Program Planning

    2.3 Implement Program

    2.4 Evaluation

Section 3: Press Release Template.....6

Section 4: Conversation of Your Life Mayoral Proclamation.....6

Section 5: Conversation of Your Life Suggested Activities.....7

Section 6: Flyer Templates.....9

    6.1 Film Screening Flyer Template

    6.2 Book Discussion Flyer Template

    6.3 Community Game Night Flyer Template

Section 7: Event Sign in Sheet.....12

Section 8: Conversation of Your Life Survey.....13

Section 9: Resources.....14



## Section 1: Build Your Task Force

### 1.1 Pre-Task Force Planning

Initiating a task force recruitment plan is critical to a successful task force. Coordinate task force member recruitment by breaking down your community by industry or geographic sectors. Here are the steps needed to begin forming a COYL task force:

1. Communicate with local partners to develop a network of potential task force members.
2. Identify the desired fields and industry sectors for your task force.
3. Educate potential task force members on their roles, and recruit those who are interested.
4. Facilitate routine communication among task force members.

### 1.2 Who Can Be A Task Force Member

Task force membership should comprise of cross-sector participation. Task force membership can consist of representatives from local office, members of the community, library coordinators, clergy members, senior resource center coordinators, hospice care facilities, and/or health care providers. Ensuring cross sector partnership in your task force will allow for a robust COYL program.

### 1.3 Task Force Roles

Task force members provide valuable assistance and function to COYL. Each task force member brings with them expertise from their respective fields, along with the connections to ensure the feasibility of COYL programming. Each COYL county has a county-wide task force to support local programming. Each task force convenes in person quarterly to review and plan local programs. COYL task force roles include:

- **Task Force Chair**: Individuals in this role lead Task Force meetings with support from Quality Institute staff. The lead could be a mayor, county surrogate, or a resident who is a subject matter in this topic. These individuals identify and recruit task force members, and are responsible for launching COYL programs with the other task force members.
- **Influencers**: Individuals in this role have relationships in their community or employer that they can tap into to support the program, to recruit other task force members, or to promote attendance and engagement throughout the community.
- **Communication Leads**: Individuals in this role help publicize COYL programs through local newspaper ads, social media, town websites, etc. These individuals spread the news of COYL events far and wide to guarantee strong event attendance.
- **Communication Supports**: These individuals help spread the word of COYL events through their social circle, in their religious congregation, and through their professional networks. These individuals remain in close communication with the Communication Leads to support their efforts by spreading information about events at the ground level.
- **Discussion Leads**: Individuals in this role are professional experts on the topics of end-of-life care and advance care planning. They are comfortable leading community discussions on this topic at movie screenings, book talks, and on panels. These individuals may be nurses, social



workers, physicians, hospital or hospice employees, members of the clergy, attorneys, etc. These individuals may also be comfortable as Event Volunteers.

- **Event Volunteers:** Individuals in this role are qualified to answer questions on end-of-life care and advance care planning. It is our goal to have one qualified volunteer at every COYL event to answer questions in private, as needed. These individuals may also be comfortable as Discussion Leads.
- **Clergy Coordinator:** Individuals in this role help identify local members of the clergy to engage in COYL, and work with them to create COYL programs in faith-based settings.
- **Health Care Professional/Institutional Coordinator:** Individuals in this role help identify health care settings including hospitals, hospices, skilled nursing facilities, long-term care facilities, etc. in which it is appropriate to coordinate grand rounds and/or educational programming on COYL.
- **Community Coordinator:** Individuals in this role help identify community centers such as libraries, senior resource centers, senior housing complexes, etc. in which it is appropriate to hold COYL programming.

At the next COYL county task force meeting, please let the Quality Institute staff know which role you would like to fill. Task force members may choose to fill one role or multiple roles, depending on their expertise.

#### **1.4 Outreach**

Reaching out is a vital step to building a COYL task force. Contact local clergy members, library coordinators, senior center coordinators, and other community gathering centers. Building a relationship with local hospice care facilities and interested health care providers can help add clinical expertise to task force membership.

## **Section 2: How to Implement a Conversation of Your Life Program**

### **2.1 Establish Program Goals**

Before planning a COYL program, it is important to strategize implementation in order to make an impact. Here are a few steps to ideate your COYL Program:

1. Define the purpose of the program
2. Define what you want to accomplish
3. Define the target population
4. Define the take away message of your program

### **2.2 Program Planning**

Developing a plan to implement your COYL program will ensure that you accomplish your program goals. Here are the steps needed to complete a program plan:



1. **Audience** – Choose your target audience. Consider the size of your potential audience and address any additional needs that they may have (ex. Handicap access for an elderly or disabled population).
2. **Location** – Contact local community centers, libraries, or senior centers to host your event. Ensure that the venue accommodates the intended audience.
3. **Time** – Choose a time for your venue that best accommodates your target audience and ensures the largest number of attendance. Keep important events in mind and host them during or around National Health Care Decisions Day to capitalize on promotion.
4. **Promotion** – Contact your venue coordinator and task force members to advertise your event. Keep your target audience in mind when deciding on advertising mediums.

### **2.3 Implement Program**

After you have completed all the steps in planning for your program, confirm all reservations and responsibilities leading up to the event date. Follow your plan during your event to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

### **2.4 Evaluation**

Evaluation is crucial to determining that program goals initially set out were accomplished. Consider the evaluation methods most appropriate to assess the success of the program. Record attendance to develop the scope of reach of the event. Gather participant feedback through:

1. Surveys\*
2. Interviews

\*A sample event survey is available in Section 8.



## Section 3: Press Release Template

### Purpose

Press releases serve as a form of advertisement to promote your event. Press releases can also be used to announce the launch of a local COYL program. Send your press release to local newspapers to reach a wider audience.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INSERT DATE

PRESS CONTACT:

Insert press contact information

On insert date, insert town name is launching a new program called Conversation of Your Life. Insert town name is one of insert number here towns in New Jersey piloting the program, which was developed by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute's Mayors Wellness Campaign.

The municipality in cooperation with community partners will be hosting a number of events to engage the community in Conversation of Your Life about advance care planning. Various representatives from insert local organizations are involved in leading the effort.

The kick-off event will be held on insert date, time, and location. Insert name and title will officially launch the project and preview the events that will take place in the coming months.

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute's Mayors Wellness Campaign runs a program called Conversation of Your Life in Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Mercer, Middlesex, and Somerset Counties. The goal of Conversation of Your Life is to encourage more individuals in New Jersey to engage in fruitful dialogue – *the Conversation of Your Life* – to let individuals' friends, family, or doctors understand and respect their end-of-life wishes through advance care planning. Conversation of Your Life is generously supported by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey. To learn more visit: [www.njhccqi.org/COYL](http://www.njhccqi.org/COYL).



## Section 4: Conversation of Your Life Proclamation

### Purpose

A COYL mayoral proclamation provides an official announcement that affirms the mayor’s support of the COYL program in your community.

# *Mayors Wellness Campaign*

## *Conversation of Your Life*

Town of \_\_\_\_\_

### **Mayor’s Proclamation**

**Whereas**, the Conversation of Your Life project was created as part of the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute Mayors Wellness Campaign; and

**Whereas**, the goal of Conversation of Your Life is to develop and promote a community conversation around advance care planning, and to engage more New Jerseyans in fruitful dialogue to let their family, friends, or doctors understand and respect their end-of-life wishes; and

**Whereas**, initially three pilot towns and their mayors participated in Conversation of a Lifetime; Tenafly, Princeton, and Gloucester Township; and

**Whereas**, today Conversation of Your Life has expanded to encompass towns in Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Mercer, Middlesex, and Somerset Counties and mayors across New Jersey are dedicated to leading this important conversation; and

**Now, Therefore**, be it resolved that the Mayor and Council of \_\_\_\_\_ wish to participate in Conversation of Your Life and congratulate the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute, the Mayors, and the residents of the participating New Jersey towns for promoting healthy lifestyle changes over the last 11 years with the Mayors Wellness Campaign.

*Signature of Mayor*

Official Seal

## Section 5: Conversation of Your Life Suggested Activities

### Purpose

Advance care planning is a difficult topic to introduce to the public. The suggested activities below provide light introductions into advance care planning to attract as many people as possible, and to increase the scope of COYL.

Event Type	Time Required	Materials Needed	Notes
<b>Movie Screening &amp; Discussion</b>	Approx. 2 Hours (90 minute video, 30 minute discussion)	Discussion leader Volunteers DVD Snacks & drinks COYL tri-fold for discussion 5 Wishes and POLST documents Sign in sheet Exit survey	Make sure screening location has correct license. Typically libraries have movie licenses.
<b>Mayors Signing Event</b>	30 minutes	Mayor Advance Directive Press COYL tri-fold Volunteers	Requires advance press to get a crowd. Have materials for attendees to complete their own advance directives, assisted by volunteers.
<b>Community Read</b>	1 hour	Discussion leader Volunteers Book on end-of-life care List of discussion questions 5 Wishes and POLST documents COYL tri-fold Sign in sheet Exit survey	Libraries in Bergen, Mercer, Camden Counties are stocked with <i>The Conversation: A Revolutionary Plan for End of Life Care</i> by Dr. Angelo Volandes.
<b>Game Night</b>	1.5 hours (30 minutes for introductory discussion, 1 hour to play)	Discussion leader Volunteers Pack of cards (Go Wish, or My Gift of Grace) 5 Wishes and POLST documents COYL tri-fold Sign in sheet Exit survey	Participants can play card games solitaire or as a duo. The purpose of this activity is to start the conversation, and help participants determine their advance care planning priorities.
<b>Panel Discussion Event</b>	1 hour (30 minutes for experts to speak, 30)	Discussion leader Volunteers 5 Wishes and POLST documents COYL tri-fold 5 Wishes and POLST documents	Feature panelists who are experts on different topics like POLST, 5 Wishes, hospice, palliative care, a member



	minutes for questions)	Sign in sheet Exit survey	of the clergy, a lawyer, etc.
<b>Visual Displays of The Conversation</b>	n/a	Before I Die board (see: <a href="http://www.njhcqi.org/initiative/mayors-wellness-campaign/mwcs-conversation-of-your-life/camden/">http://www.njhcqi.org/initiative/mayors-wellness-campaign/mwcs-conversation-of-your-life/camden/</a> for picture)	Task Forces have successfully placed Before I Die boards or 'Before I Leave' drawings around their communities as art installations, to help spark The Conversation among residents.



## Section 6: Flyer Templates

### 6.1 Film Screening Flyer Template

#### Purpose

Flyers allow you to publicize your program at community centers, senior centers, and other venues where your target population gathers to garner their attention and ensure program participation.

## Have You Had The Conversation?

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute and the insert location are sponsoring a community film screening on film title to highlight the importance of discussing your end-of-life wishes with friends, family, and your doctors.

**Date**

**Time**

**Location**

Join us for a discussion led by facilitator name, facilitator title, and a film screening of movie title.

Please call 555-555-5555 or email X to register.

Insert movie picture here.

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute’s Mayors Wellness Campaign runs a program called Conversation of Your Life in Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Mercer, Middlesex, and Somerset Counties. The goal of Conversation of Your Life is to encourage more individuals in New Jersey to engage in fruitful dialogue – *the Conversation of Your Life* – to let individuals’ friends, family, or doctors understand and respect their end-of-life wishes through advance care planning. Conversation of Your Life is generously supported by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey. To learn more visit: [www.njhqci.org/COYL](http://www.njhqci.org/COYL).



**6.2 Book Discussion Flyer Template**

# ***Have You Had The Conversation?***

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute and the X library are sponsoring a community book discussion on book title by author name to highlight the importance of discussing your end-of-life wishes with friends, family, and your doctors.

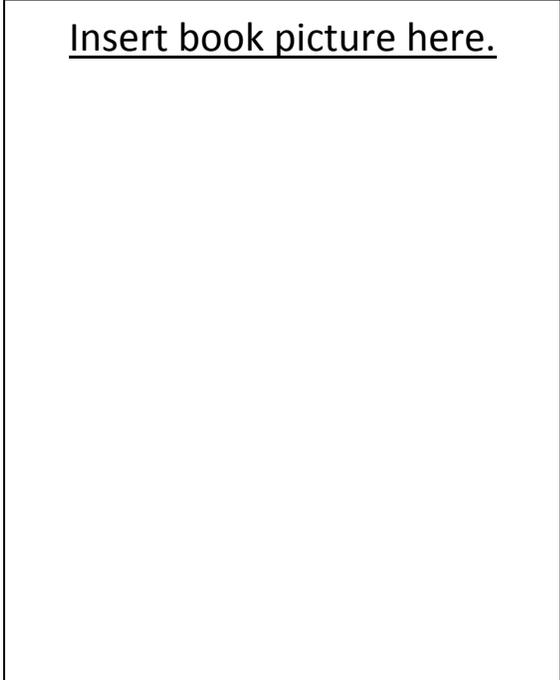
**Date**

**Time**

**Location**

Join us for a discussion led by facilitator name, facilitator title, and a book discussion of book title.

Please call 555-555-5555 or email X to register.



The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute’s Mayors Wellness Campaign runs a program called Conversation of Your Life in Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Mercer, Middlesex, and Somerset Counties. The goal of Conversation of Your Life is to encourage more individuals in New Jersey to engage in fruitful dialogue – *the Conversation of Your Life* – to let individuals’ friends, family, or doctors understand and respect their end-of-life wishes through advance care planning. Conversation of Your Life is generously supported by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey. To learn more visit: [www.njhcqi.org/COYL](http://www.njhcqi.org/COYL).

### 6.3 Community Game Night Flyer Template

## ***Have You Had The Conversation?***

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute and the insert location are sponsoring a community game night and discussion to highlight the importance of discussing your end-of-life wishes with friends, family, and your doctors.

Community members will have the opportunity to play “Go Wish,” an easy and entertaining card game that lets players think and talk about what’s important to them.

**Date**

**Time**

**Location**



Join us for a discussion led by facilitator name, facilitator title, and an engaging community game night featuring “Go Wish.”

Please call 555-555-5555 or email X to register.

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute’s Mayors Wellness Campaign runs a program called Conversation of Your Life in Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Mercer, Middlesex, and Somerset Counties. The goal of Conversation of Your Life is to encourage more individuals in New Jersey to engage in fruitful dialogue – *the Conversation of Your Life* – to let individuals’ friends, family, or doctors understand and respect their end-of-life wishes through advance care planning. Conversation of Your Life is generously supported by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey. To learn more visit: [www.njhcqi.org/COYL](http://www.njhcqi.org/COYL).







## Section 9: Resources

### Purpose

The resources below reference relevant material that can be used for program activities such as film screenings and book discussions. These resources also serve as an educational tool to spread the importance of advance care planning.

Name of Resource	Description	Link
<b>Death Over Dinner</b>	An interactive website that allows for users to have a virtual “test dinner” to practice the process of discussing end of life planning	<a href="http://deathoverdinner.org/">http://deathoverdinner.org/</a>
<b>Department of Health</b>	Features information regarding end of life care, palliative care, hospice, and advance directives	<a href="http://nj.gov/health/advancedirective/">http://nj.gov/health/advancedirective/</a>
<b>National Institute on Aging</b>	Provides information about what ACP is, why it is important, and how to set up your Advance Directive	<a href="https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/advance-care-planning">https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/advance-care-planning</a>
<b>New Jersey Hospital Association</b>	Defines advance care planning and resources to help you talk to your doctor and understand the hospital’s role.	<a href="http://www.njha.com/quality-patient-safety/advanced-care-planning/">http://www.njha.com/quality-patient-safety/advanced-care-planning/</a>
<b>Baylor Health Care System: Advance Care Planning</b>	Features information on the importance of ACP, multiple parts of ACP, and cites general end of life scenarios where ACP is crucial.	<a href="https://www.baylorhealth.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Documents_BHCS/BHCS_Patient%20Info_DocumentsForms/AdvanceCarePlanning_rev10.pdf">https://www.baylorhealth.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Documents_BHCS/BHCS_Patient%20Info_DocumentsForms/AdvanceCarePlanning_rev10.pdf</a>
<b>My Health Care Wishes App</b>	Links to an app that gives individuals the ability to store and share important health care wishes electronically through their mobile device.	<a href="http://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_aging/MyHealthCareWishesApp.html">http://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_aging/MyHealthCareWishesApp.html</a>
<b>Advance Care Planning Decisions</b>	Provides consumers with videos that explain the goals of palliative care as well as the kind of medical decisions involved in end of life care. The videos are meant to supplement provider-patient discussions.	<a href="https://www.acpdecisions.org/products/videos/">https://www.acpdecisions.org/products/videos/</a>
<b>Family Caregiver Alliance</b>	Information on how to begin end-of-life decision making, why to prepare a directive, and what type of decisions this process entails.	<a href="https://www.caregiver.org/end-life-decision-making">https://www.caregiver.org/end-life-decision-making</a>
<b>Conversation Starter Kit</b>	A user-friendly toolkit on how to start end of life conversations.	<a href="http://theconversationproject.org/starter-kit/intro/">http://theconversationproject.org/starter-kit/intro/</a>
<b>Consumer’s Tool Kit for Health Care Advance Planning</b>	A detailed 10-part toolkit for consumers on the process of advance care planning and the legal jargon behind advance care directives.	<a href="http://apps.americanbar.org/aging/publications/docs/consumer_tool_kit_bk.pdf">http://apps.americanbar.org/aging/publications/docs/consumer_tool_kit_bk.pdf</a>



<b>Good Books to Read</b>	<p>The Conversation: A Revolutionary Plan for End-of-Life Care, Angelo Volandes</p> <p>Being Mortal, Atul Gawande</p> <p>When Breath Becomes Air, Paul Kalanithi</p> <p>Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?, Roz Chast</p> <p>The Best Care Possible, Ira Byock</p>
<b>Good Films to Watch</b>	<p>Amour</p> <p>The Bucket List</p> <p>Considering the Conversation</p> <p>The Diving Bell and the Butterfly</p> <p>Life As a House</p> <p>You're Not You</p>