

Abstract

Advance Directives are the final decision a person can make in their life. These directives dictate what may happen to a person in their last stage of life should they be unable to make the decision for themselves. In the U.S., there is a general lack of knowledge surrounding advance directives leading to low rates of completion prior to a patient death (Wilkinson, Wenger, Shugarman, 2007, p. 7). This in turn, decreases patient's ability to enjoy a quality life in their last stages of life. Healthcare providers, specifically Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) have an opportunity to improve advance directive completion rates; giving their patients a better quality of life in their last moments of life. With proper relationship building, establishment of trust, and good communication, APRNs can educate and share the importance of advance directives with their patients. Adequate education on the laws and regulations surrounding advance directives, as well as, how to properly communicate these details need to be stressed during APRN educational programs.

Keywords: advance directive, advance practice registered nurse, end-of-life, DNR