COVID-19 Advance Care Planning Conversation Guide
For use with activated Health Care Proxy (HCP) for patients who are not DNR/DNI/DNH

PREPARE

- Look at the patient's chart in EMR (Meditech). What is their current code status?
- Review recent notes, confirm that COVID-19 ACP conversation has not already occurred.
- Who is the patient's Health Care Proxy, and who is the current decision maker? Confirm that you are preparing to contact the correct person.

Take a deep breath. These conversations are not easy.

CHECK IN

"Is this a good time to talk about how things are going for you and the plan for your loved one's care in the setting of the COVID-19 pandemic?"
   IF YES, proceed. IF NO, see if you can schedule another time to talk. If proxy seems resistant to the discussion, gently explore why: *"Would you be willing to share your concerns about discussing COVID-19?"*
"How are you doing with all of this?"

ASK ABOUT COVID-19

"What have you been thinking about COVID-19 and your situation?"
"What do you understand about the complications of COVID-19 and how it may affect your loved one?"
   Just LISTEN

LAY OUT ISSUES

"Because of your loved one's age and health issues, they are at high risk of getting really sick, and even dying, if you they got COVID-19."
   [This is bad news! PAUSE and check in *"How does that sit with you?"* or respond to emotion (see below)]

TALK ABOUT WHAT MATTERS

"We're in an extraordinary situation. Given your situation, what matters to you? (About any part of your life? About your health care?) What worries you the most right now?"

EXPECT EMOTION

Name the emotion: *"It can be scary to think about what may happen"*
Understand and Support: *"I know this is a lot to take in all at once. I want to support you any way I can."*

RECOMMEND A PLAN

Summarize goals/values/preferences
"Thank you for helping me better understand what matters most to you. You have said [describe themes from the conversation, e.g., goals, values, beliefs]. Did I get that right?"

Make a recommendation–if they would be able to hear it.
"Based on what I've heard about what's important to you and my worries about your loved one's health if they get COVID-19, is it ok if I give a recommendation?" If yes:
"I'd recommend [this]. What do you think?"

EXAMPLE: "Here's what I'd recommend based on what you are telling me. We will continue to take care of your loved one no matter what. The best case is that they don't get the virus. The worst case is that they get the virus despite our precautions. In that case I recommend that we continue to care for them at [LTC Facility], with this expert team who already knows them, rather than transfer them to the hospital. I worry that a transfer to the hospital wouldn't help meet the goals you identified of being comfortable and being at home. How does that sound?"

SUMMARIZE THE CONVERSATION AND RECORD IT

"Thank you for having that hard conversation with me. I am going to write down what we discussed in your chart. I want to continue to support you in any way I can."

Document
- Document conversation in EMR (Meditech)
- Send summary email to unit-based care team
- Complete call log in RedCAP
- Do not move on to next conversation until these steps are completed.

Version 1.0. Adapted from SFVA Hospice and Palliative Care Service, Respecting Choices, CAPC/VitalTalk, Ariadne Labs, Prepareforyourcare.org.