



## What is Health Education and Why is it Important?

As healthcare providers (HCP) we have many roles, one of these is health education. Health education goes beyond standard teaching and further involves helping the patient to apply their own beliefs and needs to their health care.

Health education is important for all patients and families including those facing life-limiting illnesses. Not only is providing health education a [Health Quality Standard](#), it has many benefits for patients, including:

- Better understanding about their illness and care plan
- Preparing them for future care choices
- Increasing their sense of control and well-being

Health education should be provided with each learner's reading level, language and culture in mind. There are many ways to provide education, such as, in-person teaching (formal and informal), written sources, online learning and hands-on learning. For more information on health education please refer to the [Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario](#).

## For Patients and Families

Since the start of COVID-19, [Advance Care Planning](#) (ACP) has become more important than ever for our patients and their Substitute Decision Makers (SDM). ACP helps patients and their SDMs in planning for the future and helps with smoother shifts in care as their illness advances.

As HCPs we need to be aware of health education resources that can support learning for patients and their SDMs. It is important to review Ontario specific resources such as [Speak Up Ontario](#), as it offers helpful information on ACP for HCPs, patients and SDMs. There are also COVID-19 specific resources that have been made for [patients and SDMs](#).

These resources can be used to support learning and normalize ACP in your day-to-day work with patients and their SDMs. Other ways to use these resources includes reviewing them with patients and their SDMs at care conferences, home care visits, clinic appointments, admission (to hospital, retirement home or long-term care) and family meetings.



## Health Education Spotlight Series

### Focus #1: Advance Care Planning

#### Additional Resources to Support Patient/Family ACP Education

- [Tip of the Month: HQO Quality Standard for Palliative Care- ACP](#)
- [Tip of the Month: Community Legal Education Ontario- Power of Attorney](#)
- [Advance Care Planning Conversations Worth Having](#)
- [HPC Consultation Services ACP & Health Care Consent in Ontario Resource Page](#)

#### References

- [Health Quality Ontario](#)
- [Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario](#)
- [Speak Up Ontario](#)
- [Advance Care Planning Conversations Worth Having](#)
- [HPC Consultation Services Waterloo Wellington](#)