

paradigm changing

SpeakSooner[®]
a center for communication in medicine initiative



“...The Center for Communication in Medicine’s new SpeakSooner initiative is challenging all our assumptions about what can be accomplished.”

LIDIA SCHAPIRA, MD
Director of Cancer Survivorship
Stanford Comprehensive Cancer Institute,
Associate Professor of Medicine (Oncology)
Stanford University School of Medicine

The **SpeakSooner**[®] initiative offers a platform to address a patient’s right to critical medical information.

Above, Palliative Care Physician Dr. Allen Hutcheson with patient Jan Martin Bopp



Dr. Schapira introduces the SpeakSooner community education program, “Illness Does Not Just Impact One Person”

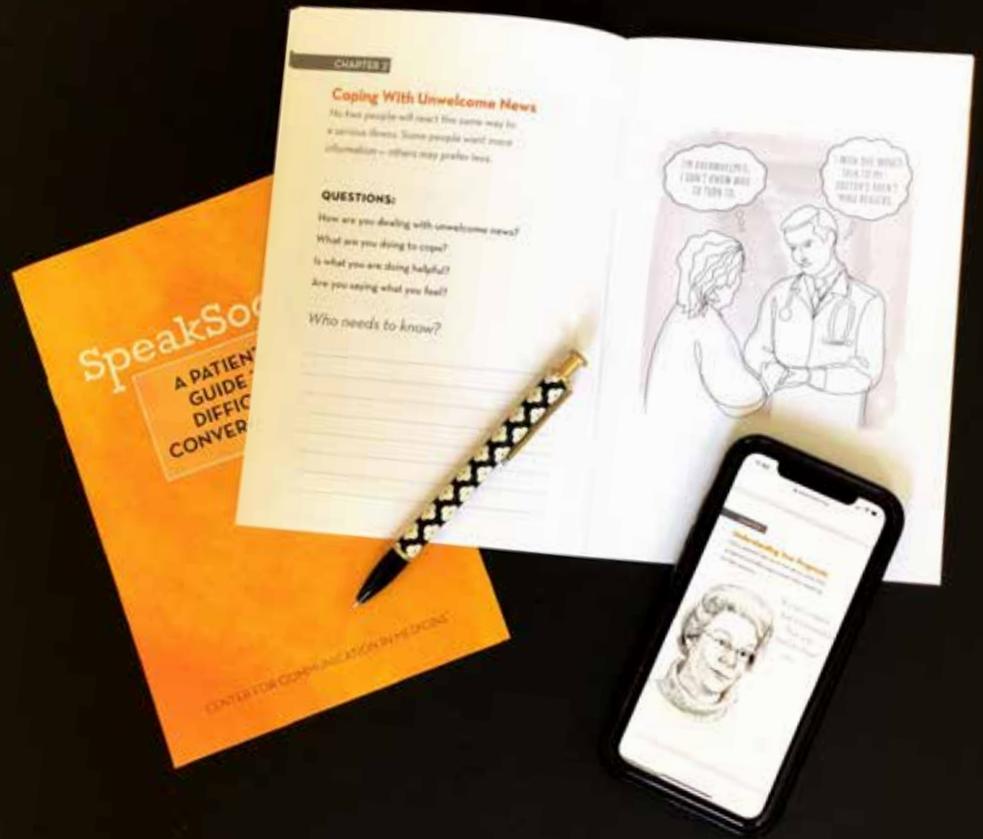
The need for open and honest communication between patients, loved ones, and healthcare providers is urgent.

Only **5%** of advanced cancer patients fully understand their prognosis

urgent

Center for Communication in Medicine's (CCM's) programs and tools help patients actively engage in conversations about treatment options, quality of life considerations, and supportive care needs, which can lead to informed choices and reduced healthcare costs. While other projects offer more narrowly focused end-of-life decision aids, our goal is to prepare patients to **identify concerns and ask questions sooner in the course of illness.**

good communication
is good medicine®



Our mission is to educate patients, families, and healthcare providers about the key role of communication in improving healthcare delivery.

66% of patients with incurable cancer did not understand their treatment was palliative, not curative

educating

Building on 20 years of fieldwork to improve communication in healthcare, the Center for Communication in Medicine developed *SpeakSooner: A Patient's Guide to Difficult Conversations*, which is based on the firsthand experiences of those facing serious illness.

The Guide helps patients think about their needs, values, and goals, resulting in being better prepared to ask thoughtful questions about treatment options and quality-of-life considerations and make informed decisions about care.

SpeakSooner programs and materials were developed for use in medical practices, communication skills training with healthcare providers, community education workshops, and webinars.

“... your guide gives patients permission to discuss their questions and preferences with physicians directly. Your project is paradigm changing.”

ALEXI WRIGHT, MD, MPH
Dana Farber Cancer Institute
Brigham and Women's Hospital

Our guide prepares patients to ask questions and express concerns to healthcare providers—beginning sooner in the course of illness.

Nearly **25%**
of Medicare's entire annual budget
is spent on acute care interventions
during the last 30 days of life.

preparing

Understanding prognosis, treatment options, and quality-of-life issues allows patients to make informed decisions about their care.

“There is no increase in anxiety or distress recorded as a result of telling patients the truth about their illness.”

SE HARRINGTON, ET AL.
Journal of Community Oncology, 2010

SpeakSooner Community Education

Programs help patients and families to fortify relationships, identify needed supports, and minimize regrets through open dialogue in planning of care.

community



Ineffective communication takes a human and economic toll leading to unnecessary suffering for patients, regrets for loved ones, and increased healthcare costs.

“Did I do all that I could for my mother? *The Guide* has given me hope that questions and plans can be addressed early and with honest communication.”

DENISE J.
Daughter and caregiver

THE URGENT NEED

Our SpeakSooner Programs offer a framework to address a patient's right to understand critical medical information while recognizing the challenges healthcare providers face in discussing issues that are hard to talk about. Effective communication builds partnerships, improving satisfaction with care.

Speak Sooner

CCM offers the community a priceless gift. There is an overwhelming need and thirst for your expertise.*

*MIRIAM S., Community Education Program attendee

“Physicians, nurses, social workers are more fully engaged by listening to and reading patient comments. *The Guide* opens doors for better communication.”

ALLAN EISEMANN, MD
Medical Director, Rutland Regional
Cancer Center & Palliative Care



PATIENT-CENTERED, DOCTOR-APPROVED

The Center for Communication in Medicine has a 20-year history of improving communication between patients, loved ones, and healthcare professionals. The SpeakSooner initiative expands our mission through educating communities about the patient's role in opening difficult and meaningful conversations. With access to our materials in mind, **SpeakSooner: A Patient's Guide to Difficult Conversations** is available online at SpeakSooner.org.

At some time in our lives we or a loved one will become a patient, and how we communicate can influence the care we receive.

The first step is... **SpeakSooner**

LEARN MORE AT SPEAKSOONER.ORG

“Every patient should have this guide; every social worker, nurse, doctor, and chaplain should offer it to a patient and family to say: ‘I’m here; we can talk.’”

LINDA EMANUEL, MD, PhD
Director, Buehler Center on Aging, Health & Society
Northwestern Feinberg School of Medicine



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