Host’s Guide:

1. First, introduce the topics of today’s Conversation: “What would you do if you or a loved one were diagnosed with a serious illness?”

2. Establish group rules.
   1. Listen to each other respectfully.
   2. Share airtime – Be mindful of how much you are speaking.
   3. Respect privacy – Personal information that people share during this Conversation is not to be talked about elsewhere.

3. Introduce yourself.
   • Introduce yourself, share your personal health experience, and why you chose to “champion” this issue. (This will help to set the tone and guide the other members of the group).

4. Get to know the group.
   • Ask the group members to introduce themselves and share personal experiences related to choices about dealing with serious illness. Let group members know they can “pass” if they do not feel comfortable sharing.

5. Give each group member the “Ask Your Doctor” Conversation pages. Discuss the information.
   • We don’t expect you to take on the role of doctor, so refer people to their doctor, or nurse for more detailed information. You don’t have to know the answers! A resource list is available.
   • Encourage group members to share this information with others.
• Conversation and stories about frustration with doctor’s offices and care of themselves of a loved one can help decrease the feeling of being alone. The goal is to encourage Conversations and stories that focus on what each person would want for them or a loved one if they had a serious or life-limiting illness. Some of these discussions may lead naturally to what end of life options are available, including hospice.

• You may find that some people feel angry, stressed, or overwhelmed, which can be very hard to talk about. Be supportive of anyone who would like to talk about these feelings, but don’t push anyone to talk about their emotions. Remind the group that thinking or talking about emotions is important because being stressed can hurt your body and health. If someone starts crying, give that person a few moments. Then turn to the rest of the group and ask if anyone else has felt overwhelmed, sad, or frustrated regarding health or health care issues.

6. Ask each person to set a goal and write it down on the note paper provided in the folder.
   • Ask if anyone would like to share the goal he or she selected.
   • Some people may need help choosing a goal or writing it down.

7. Ask how this Conversation could be better.
   • How can we spread the word in the community?
   • Is this information helpful in spreading the word in the community?
   • What will be hard about using these ideas for you and people you know?
   • Would it be helpful to have more in depth information or more challenging goals (like “Writing an advance care directive”)?

8. Continue the Conversation
   • Thank the group for their time, and give each member the Ask Your Doctor wallet cards. Ask participants to share them with friends/family, or to use them to practice asking these questions with others.

For more information about TRUE Conversations, contact Janelle Shearer, Stratis Health, jshearer@stratishealth.org, 952-853-8553,