

CPR Decision Aid

Summary

Thanks in part to its portrayal in television shows, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is a commonly known life-sustaining treatment used to try and restart someone's heart. Unfortunately, CPR is depicted in these shows as being very effective when, as we learned in the Guardianship Training Video-CPR, success rates for CPR among older individuals, those with serious illness, and those living in care facilities are quite low. This misinformation can cause healthcare decision makers to make decisions based on inaccurate information, which may not be consistent with what the individual values and would choose if they were able to make their own decisions.

Below are some questions to consider and discuss with your protected person's physician and your protected person, if they are able. By doing so, the hope is that you feel confident in knowing that the decision you make, either during a sudden event or one that you make ahead of time as part of a shared decision-making conversation, is based on facts and an understanding of what matters most to your protected person.

Questions

Questions to Ask Yourself, Your Protected Person or Your Protected Person's Physician

- Would the physician recommend the protected person have CPR if their heart stopped?
- Would it be in the best interest of your protected person to have CPR given their medical condition?
- Has the protected person ever told you if they would want CPR or not?
- Does the protected person have a previously created a living will or medical power of attorney that indicates their preferences for CPR?
- What can be expected if my protected person receives CPR? What if they choose not to have CPR?
- What are some of the short term and long term burdens my protected person may face if they receive CPR?
- What has my protected person shared about what is most important to them if they became seriously ill or injured?
- Does your protected person have advanced age or an underlying serious illness that makes CPR less likely to be successful?
- Would my protected person do anything to try to live longer even knowing CPR may not do what they hoped to do and could lead to short and long-term complications?
 - If yes, having CPR if their heart and breathing stopped may be what they would want.
- Would your protected person prefer to avoid the ICU and have a natural death rather than face an uncertain outcome? Then having an order for No Attempt CPR may be what they would want.