

MEDIA RELEASE:

For Immediate Release

April 16, 2015

On May 7, 2015 it's time to **Speak Up Norfolk**. Norfolk General Hospital, Norfolk Hospital Nursing Home and Volunteer Association in partnership with the Norfolk County Public Library will start the conversation about end-of-life care and advance care planning in our community.

Advance care planning allows you to tell your story; your wishes at the end of life, especially in the event that you cannot speak for yourself. The most important aspects of this plan are the naming of one or more Substitute Decision Makers and to have a conversation with them about your wishes. Write your own ending, have a plan.

NGH and the Simcoe library branch will host a 2 hour presentation featuring keynote speaker Judith Wahl lawyer and Executive Director at the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly speaking about "Health Care Consent and Advance Care Planning." Guest speakers; Dr. Robyn Martin-Godelie with the Palliative Care Network will provide introductory and closing remarks and Nurse RoseMarie Baker Palliative Care consultant with Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant CCAC will discuss Pain and Symptom Management. Also, Port Dover author Janet Hepburn will be on hand with copies of her Evergreen Award nominated book 'Flee, Fly, Flown.'

The goal of **Speak Up Norfolk** is to provide information and raise awareness of the importance of advance care planning - in order to improve the quality of life and death in our community. This is particularly important in light of Norfolk's aging population and implications for the health care system and end-of-life care.

Speak Up Norfolk is free to attend but advance registration is required. Please call the library at 519-426-3506 ext. 5 to reserve your seat.

Did you know?

- About **six in ten** Canadians believe that it's extremely important to talk to someone about their end-of-life care preferences - but **only 45%** have done so.
- When asked about their reluctance for talking about end-of-life care, **39% of Canadians** say they are '**creeped out**' by the conversation.
- Canadians who have an advance care plan are **more engaged** in the health care system - **90%** of them **have a family physician** or regular place of care.

(*source: advancecareplanning.ca)

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About our guests:

Judith Wahl has been the Executive Director at the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly since its inception in 1984. She has an Honours B.A. from the University of Toronto and an LL.B. from Osgoode Hall Law School. She was called to the Ontario Bar in 1979. Judith has been very active in advocating for the rights of older adults and in the development of elder law as an area of practice. Based on her experiences representing clients, Judith often represents ACE in government consultations on issues of policy development and law reform affecting older adults. Judith has considerable experience training and teaching not only seniors but the family and friends of seniors, social workers, health practitioners and other service providers about the legal rights of older adults. She is a frequent speaker at local, provincial and national conferences on elder law issues. She previously taught a law and aging course in the Masters of Social Work program at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Robyn Martin-Godelie has been a family physician for 10 years. She is passionate about Palliative care and is an Outreach physician with the Stedman Community Hospital Outreach team. Robyn is Chief of Service Complex Care at Norfolk General Hospital and our local expert in palliative care.

RoseMarie Baker is a daughter and a sister, a bride of 18 years and a mother of 1 daughter, 2 sons, who have given her 2 daughter-in-laws and 3 grandsons. In her spare time she is a registered nurse, certified in hospice palliative care and teaches pain management to nurses in the community and long term care. RoseMarie has worked for 24 years in the field of end of life care in various settings from Residential Hospice, Community Nursing and not for profit. This has been her life calling although she wasn't aware of it at first. She has learned much from those who are at the edge of the mystery. RoseMarie is also a certified yoga instructor (200 hour) and teaches classical hatha yoga. Her mission is to grow her soul through continuing her studies in classical yoga and is currently enrolled in the 500 hour teacher training program.

Janet Hepburn is from Port Dover and author of "Flee, Fly, Flown" Her book was recently recognized by the Ontario Library Association's Evergreen Awards. Here is a description from the publisher:

When Lillian and Audrey hatch a plot to escape from Tranquil Meadows Nursing Home, "borrow" a car, and spend their hastily planned vacation time driving to destinations west, they aren't fully aware of the challenges they will face. All they know is that the warm days of August call to them, and the need to escape the daily routines and humiliations of nursing home life has become overwhelming.



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“Our mission is to relieve illness and suffering, and help people live healthier lives.”

