

Courageous conversations for GPs.

Building confidence
by building on existing skills

Camden and Islington CCGs 2013

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How common is this?



And not just with End of Life Care...

The Picture is from the [Spotlight: on Palliative Care beyond Cancer](#) BMJ 16th Sep2010

...it's basic General Practice to explore concerns and expectations.



“What’s your greatest health concern?”

...it's basic General Practice to explore concerns and expectations.

Sexual health

Depression

Continance



Acne

Sick notes

“What’s your greatest health concern?”

Challenging terrain

Conversations around
End of life can be
Challenging

In challenging terrain wear
comfortable shoes!



Phrases that are at home in
your everyday consultations

To provide an opening...use an open question

For example

- What's the main thing on your mind?
- What's your greatest health concern?
- How do you see the future?
- What are your priorities?

- You can add...if you want...given your state of health.

- Who's at home and what will they want to know we talked about?



“Wear comfortable Shoes”

Use phrases that are equally at home in everyday consultations.



When are patients
most receptive?

When..

..if we provide the opportunity
are they most likely to engage in
a challenging conversation?

Trigger events

More patients will respond positively to the openings provided if recent events have caused them to question their own mortality or future health, e.g.

- The diagnosis or progression of a life limiting disease
- New treatment options to consider
- Just come out of hospital “close call”
- The death of a spouse or close friend
- A need to consider a different care setting
- Changing circumstances, e.g. within the family or retirement,

If at first they don't engage..

And you want to press, then take the initiative by moving from open to more focused questions

e.g. given everything that's been going on I wonder if it would help to talk about some of the practicalities you (loved ones) may be faced with

Go with the flow

Watch all of their language

- body language, eyes
- verbal tone
- direct responses

If they are not engaging or if you are meeting active resistance then don't insist, postpone

“Perhaps that's a conversation for another time..”

A BIG PLUS: They will have learnt you are comfortable with the conversation