

# Talk about wishes during Healthcare Decision Day

Candace McKibben, Special to the Democrat 6:14 p.m. ET April 11, 2017



(Photo: Democrat files)

At the inspiration of a young attorney in Virginia, for the past eight years people in the United States have recognized National Healthcare Decision Day on April 16. Nathan Kottkamp founded Virginia Advance Directives Day on April 16, 2006, stating that “the only sure things in life are taxes and death.”

Every hospital in Virginia, as well as many other groups, participated. In 2008, Kottkamp moved the concept to a national level, and Big Bend Hospice participated in a panel discussion held at HealthSouth for the first National Healthcare Decision Day. Since then, Big Bend Hospice has offered a free community event around the day every year.

In 2017, Kottkamp partnered with the Conversation Project. This organization, inspired by Boston Globe columnist Ellen Goodman, is dedicated to helping people talk about their wishes for end-of-life care. It has excellent online resources at <http://theconversationproject.org/>. With the help of the Conversation Project, this year, National Healthcare Decision Day has become a week. The theme of the week is, “It always seems too early, until it is too late.”

Big Bend Hospice plans several events for this important week. One is in partnership with the FSU Center for Innovative Collaboration in Medicine and Law.

On April 20 at the FSU College of Medicine Atrium, Big Bend Hospice will have a resource fair from 5 until 6 p.m. with vendors sharing important and relevant information.

At 6 p.m. in the auditorium there will be a presentation from Peggy Battin, philosopher and bioethicist, in a compelling 20-minute TEDMED talk about her husband’s end-of-life journey and discussion on the implications with a panel of local experts. Panelists include Marshall Kapp, moderator, with Patrick Bailey, Jim DeBeaugrine, Cynthia Hall, JR Harding, Dr. David Huang, Jana McConnaughay, Paul Malley and Stephanie Prost. There will be some exceptional students on the panel because this discussion is for adults of all ages. There is no charge for the evening.

Free parking is available in faculty/student lots after 4:45 p.m. The closest lots include the psychology lot off West Call Street, the garage at Stadium Drive and Spirit Way, and the Stone North Lot off Academic Way and Hull Drive. Limited spots are available in front of the medical school for persons needing accessible parking and are reserved by emailing [frontdesk@med.fsu.edu](mailto:frontdesk@med.fsu.edu) or by calling 850-645-8370.

With the advances in medical technology, it has become more important than ever for people to consider their wishes regarding what medical care they would want and not want at the end of life.

Contact the Rev. Candace McKibben, director of Faith Outreach at Big Bend Hospice, at [candace@bigbendhospice.org](mailto:candace@bigbendhospice.org) or 850-671-6029 for more information.

## If you go

**What:** National Healthcare Decision Week Community Event

**When:** Thursday, April 20: 5 p.m. ResourTalk about wishes during Healthcare Decision

Dayce Fair; 6-7:30 p.m. Presentation and Panel **Where:** FSU College of Medicine

Auditorium

**Contact:** Candace McKibben at [candace@bigbendhospice.org](mailto:candace@bigbendhospice.org) or 850-671-6029.

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