

## ACO In Action

### Portland Turns Out for Advance Care Planning Event

More than 170 Portland area community members recently joined the MaineHealth ACO and partner organizations for an evening of thinking and talking about end-of-life care and advance care planning. The event, held on the evening of April 19 at USM's Hannaford Hall, featured a screening of Dr. Atul Gawande's PBS Frontline documentary *Being Mortal* and a panel discussion with local palliative care and end-of-life care experts.

"This event is a direct result of the ACO's ongoing commitment to spreading end-of-life care best practices. It's a new approach, however. It's the first time we've delivered our message beyond health systems and directly to the general public. And considering the positive response, this is probably just the first in a number of public events sponsored or co-sponsored by the ACO," said Dr. Jeff Aalberg, MaineHealth ACO chief medical officer and an organizer of the event.

The [Being Mortal documentary](#) is an exploration of the challenges that patients, families and health care providers all face when determining and communicating how patients want to approach and experience the end of their lives. Profiles of hospice patients illustrate the central role that advance care planning can have on assuring that patients face death on their own terms. The film is based on Dr. Gawande's best-selling book of the same title.

After the evening's screening of *Being Mortal*, Priscilla Platt from the Southern Maine Agency on Aging and MaineHealth's Dr. Isabella Stumpf and Frank Chessa took questions moderated by Dr. Jeff Aalberg. Topics included the importance of preparing health care providers for difficult end-of-life discussions and the responsibility that patients have to accept and prepare for the inevitable end of their lives.

The event was held in conjunction with National Health Care Decisions Day, an annual campaign to raise awareness of advance care planning. Attendees were asked to have a conversation with their loved ones about advance care planning, complete an advance care planning directive and engage others in advance care planning. MaineHealth ACO and MaineHealth staff handed out more than 300 copies of the [Maine Health Care Advance Directive Form](#) and informed attendees where they could get help completing it.

The MaineHealth ACO organized the event in cooperation with MaineHealth Elder Care Services and the Southern Maine Agency on Aging. Sponsorship was provided by MaineHealth, Maine Medical Center, MaineHealth Care at Home and Maine Medical Partners.

To learn more about Advance Care Planning, please contact:

- MaineHealth Learning Resource Center at [learningcenter@mainehealth.org](mailto:learningcenter@mainehealth.org) or (866) 609-5183
- Southern Maine Agency on Aging at [jminkowitz@smaa.org](mailto:jminkowitz@smaa.org) or (207) 396-6545

Upcoming advance care planning event:

- **Advance Care Planning Seminar:** Southern Maine Agency on Aging, May 16, 1 – 2:30 pm, SMAA office, Scarborough. RSVP to [jminkowitz@smaa.org](mailto:jminkowitz@smaa.org) or (207) 396-6545.