How to ask the What Ifs and Resources

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Objectives

- Offer some tips or approaches with that “conversation”
- Provide information on some quality resources in our community to offer help and hope
- Underscore the need for an interdisciplinary approach from the community based and medical providers
Reference materials

A Clinician’s Handbook Talking with Your Older Patient, - National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health #08-7105
Chapter 7
Breaking the Bad News

➢ It isn’t easy: everyone handles bad news differently—shock, sorrow, anger, denial, disbelief

➢ The Education in Palliative and End of Life Project (EPEC) www.epec.net
Steps

• Prepare yourself-think about what you want to say and make sure you have all the information you need

• Be sure there is enough time- the end of the day?

• Find out what the person knows about the condition

• Find out what the person wants to know
• Be as straight forward as possible
• Be positive but don’t minimize the seriousness of dx... “I feel bad to have to tell you”
• Have materials available i.e. SMAA brochure, Senior News, Savvy schedule, Caring for a Person with Alzheimer’s Disease.
• Embed a social worker in your practice- Intermed did!!!
• Provide reassurance that you and others will help
• Have an informational packet of helpful materials
• Establish a plan—arrange another visit/appointment so you both stay connected through this journey
• Link to Community Links- www.mainecommunitylinks.org
• In follow up visits assess the emotional state of the patient and family to see if other interventions are needed
• Refer to the AAA and other community based programs like the Alzheimer’s Association
Why the AAA as a Resource?

• Each has a Family Caregiver Program
• Each has well trained social worker staff
• Up to date options like Putting the Puzzle Together, Savvy I and II, one on one guidance, resource materials
• Adult Day Services to provide respite, fun, and purposeful activities
• Person Centered Approach
• Future Biddeford site
• Future Falmouth site
Interdisciplinary Approaches

• There is work for everyone
• Each discipline brings something very special to the table
• Learning takes place in a nurturing environment
• This approach sees clients and families as “whole” beings
• Thank you