

**SPEAKER SERIES**  
**CHANGING THE CONVERSATION  
ON PALLIATIVE CARE**

**PALLIATIVE CARE:  
WHAT IT IS...AND WHAT  
IT IS NOT**

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

# CHANGING THE CONVERSATION ON PALLIATIVE CARE



## Agenda

- Welcome & Overview (5 mins)
  - Sue Weldon, CEO & Founder, Unite for HER
  - Barbara Bigelow, Individual Patient Advocate, MBC Alliance
- Changing the Conversation on Palliative Care | Cal Cates, Executive Director, Healwell (40 mins)
- Q & A (10 mins)
- Wrap-up | Cal Cates and Barbara Bigelow (5 mins)
  - Save the date! September 10th “Pain Management and Effective Communication With Your Palliative Care Team” with Dr. Caroline Cubbison, Dana Farber Cancer Institute | Registration coming soon!
  - Check out [MBCAlliance.org/SpeakerSeries](https://MBCAlliance.org/SpeakerSeries)



FEATURED GUEST

**CAL CATES**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HEALWELL**

**SPEAKER SERIES**  
**CHANGING THE CONVERSATION  
ON PALLIATIVE CARE**

Cal Cates is an award-winning writer, published researcher, international speaker, and the founder and Executive Director of Healwell, a non-profit founded in 2009, whose mission is to improve quality of life for people affected by acute, chronic, and serious illness. They have led discussions and workshops with the metastatic cancer community through Philadelphia-based cancer support organization Unite for HER since 2012 and they teach an immersive 24-hour course they created called “Opening to the Mystery: Presence in Caregiving at the End of Life.”

They won a Maggie Award in 2018 for Best Feature Article in a publication with circulation greater than 50,000 for their article “Death, Dying and the Breakability of Us All” in Massage and Bodywork magazine. They have trained thousands of healthcare providers in skills of resiliency, self-awareness, communication, and forgiveness. They have dedicated their career to advocacy in healthcare, massage therapy as social justice, and to revolutionizing education for healthcare providers.



Is palliative care for me?



# Palliative Care Is Not Hospice

Ideally, begins at diagnosis

Focuses on symptom management, function and quality of life

An extra layer of support

# Myths and Misnomers





“I’ll see about palliative care when I’m really sick.”

“My quality of life is fine.”

“They’re going to push me into hospice.”

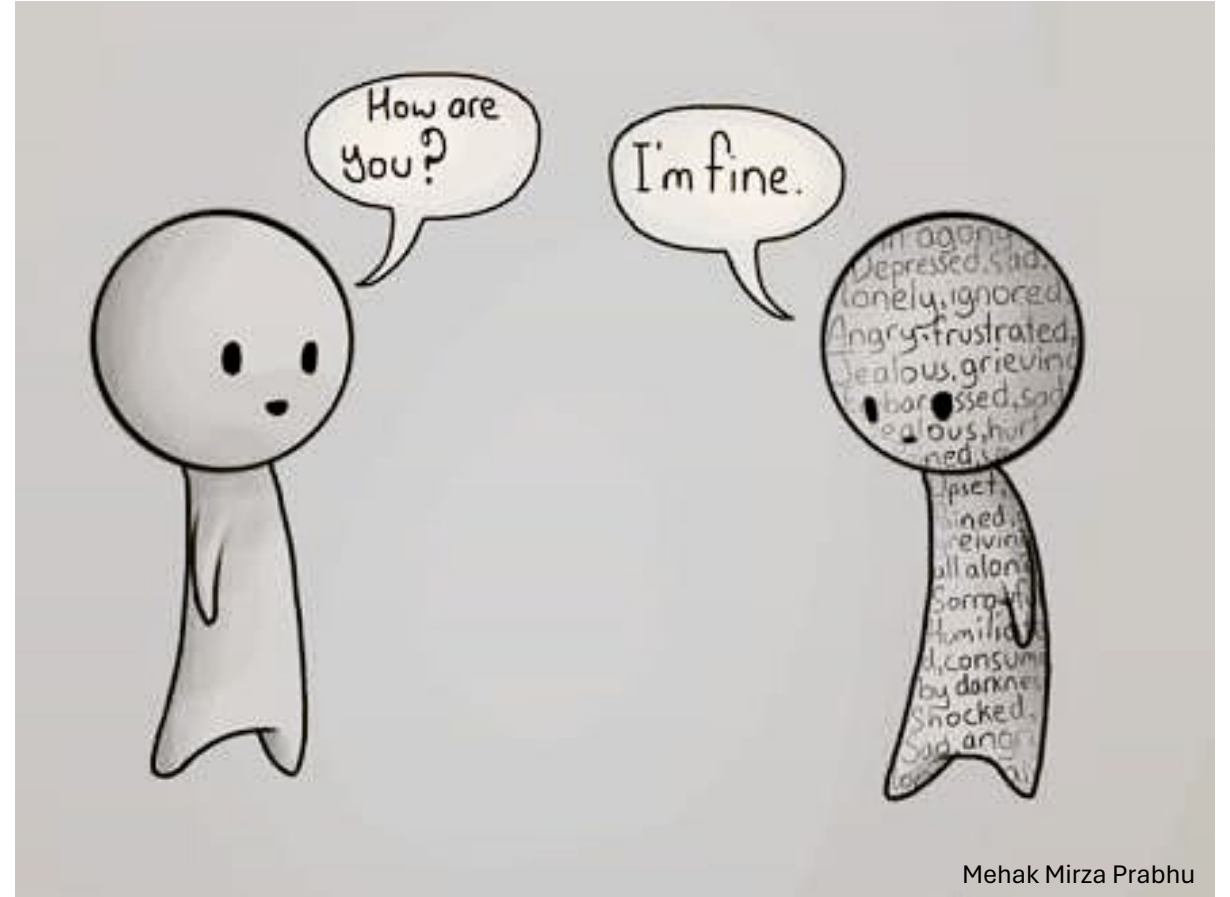
“My oncologist says I don’t need palliative care.”

“I’ll see about palliative care when I’m really sick.”





“My quality of life is fine.”



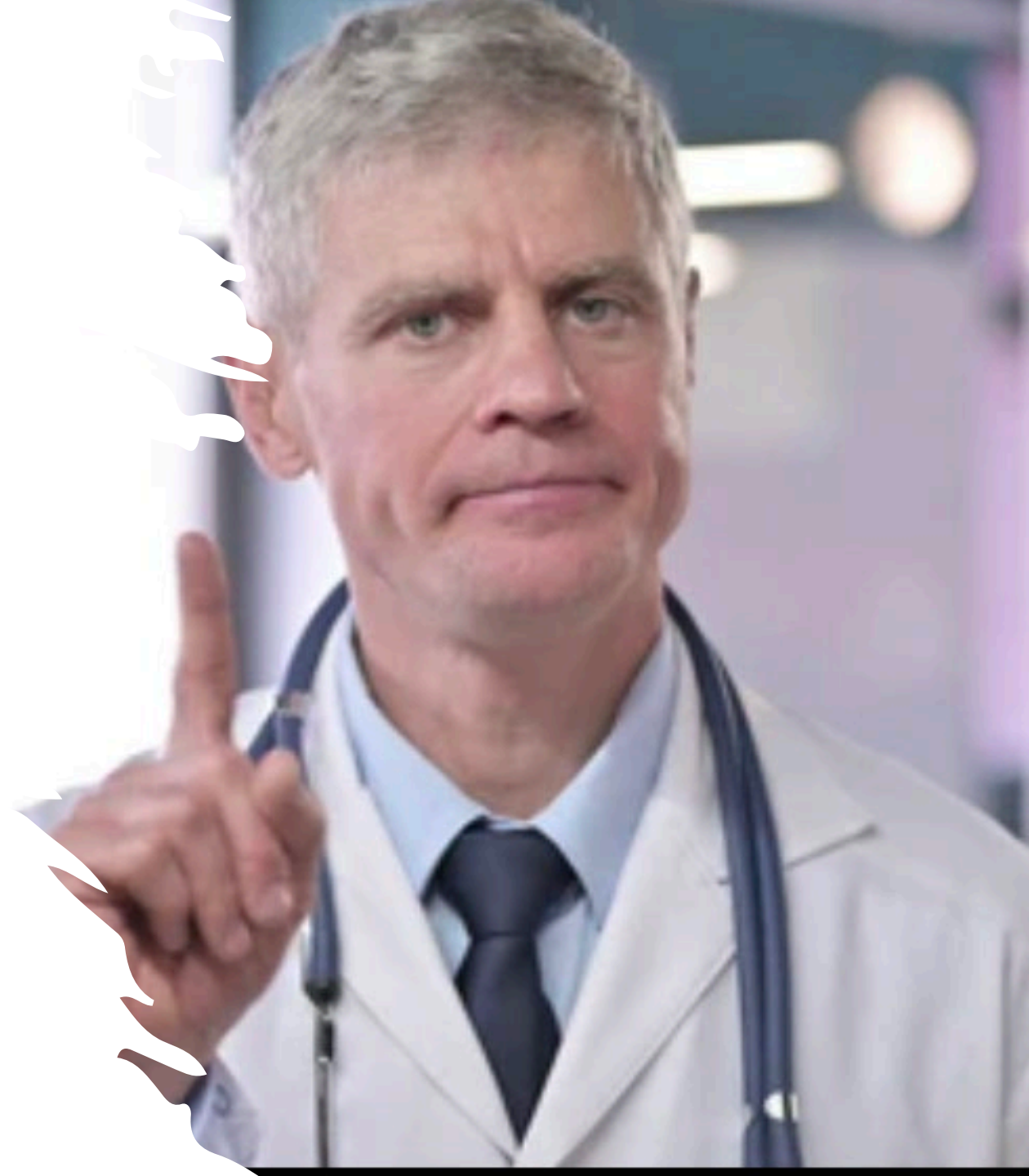
Mehak Mirza Prabhu

---

“They’re going to push me into hospice.”



“My oncologist says I don’t  
need palliative care.”





It's not a hand-off.

So, what is  
this palliative  
care bizniz?



<https://unsplash.com/photos/text-DZcZ4Kskq6U>

- Physician
- NP and/or RN
- Social worker
- Chaplain
- OT, PT, MT
- Registered Dietitian  
Yoga therapist
- OT, PT
- specialists



collaborative, interdisciplinary care

---

Besides pain management, what  
can PC do?





## PALLIATIVE CARE GIVES YOU OPTIONS

Medical marijuana

Social work

Chaplaincy

Family support

Community resources

Case management





There's no test.  
They will not make you qualify.

---

Do you have symptoms  
from treatment or from  
cancer?

Palliative care can help.



Palliative care is for  
the whole family.





**Insurance may cover palliative care.** Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance options may help offset expenses, even for patients receiving care at home.



**Medicare and Medicaid will pay for most palliative care services.** However, only treatments and medications deemed “medically necessary” will be covered.



**You can also use private funds to pay for palliative care.** If a patient’s insurance won’t cover everything, they can rely on retirement funds, their pension, an HSA, and more.

## Here's what works and doesn't

### Instead of...

Instead of pushing the 'right choice'...

### Before

You can use an advance directive form or tell your doctor that you don't want to be resuscitated. Your doctor will put the DNR order in your medical chart.

### Do this...

Show a model of the back-and-forth conversation that you want to encourage...

### After

Show a patient saying to their clinician: "I saw this video about the benefits of palliative care during a serious illness, about how it helps people and their families get through it. Could you refer me to palliative care?"

<https://seriousillnessmessaging.org/>

## Here's what works and doesn't

### Instead of...

Trying to educate people about the differences between palliative care and hospice

### Before

For example, if an older person wants to die at home, receiving end-of-life care for pain and other symptoms, and makes this known to health care providers and family, it is less likely he or she will die in a hospital receiving unwanted treatments.

### Do this...

Illustrate a single choice and the consequences—from the patient's point of view.

### After

Later, Carmen was faced with deciding whether to have a procedure that was painful and risky. She asked if having the procedure meant she could get back to her Sunday faith services. When the doctor said she wasn't sure, Carmen chose a plan that allowed her to stay at home. That plan included hospice.

# Serious Illness Messaging Guide Brief

Evidence-Based Messaging Toolkit for  
Serious Illness Care

# HOW DO I FIND PALLIATIVE CARE?



<https://getpalliativecare.org/provider-directory/>



<https://www.nhpco.org/find-a-care-provider/>

## Some legwork....

call around to local organizations to learn if they provide palliative care; if so, find out what settings, what diagnoses and if they take insurance

oncology group/practice groups sometimes work with a PC provider or vendors



<https://www.carelon.com/>

What else?



**SPEAKER SERIES**  
**CHANGING THE CONVERSATION  
ON PALLIATIVE CARE**

**THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!**

**WATCH ALL WEBINARS:  
[MBCAlliance.org/SpeakerSeries](https://MBCAlliance.org/SpeakerSeries)**