

LifeCourse Care Guide Role

What is a LifeCourse Care Guide?

LifeCourse care guides are trained community health workers attached to existing care teams. The care guide meets with patients where they live to establish an ongoing supportive relationship, connect patients with needed resources, and prepare for future care needs. Care guides explore what matters most to patients, empowering them to advocate for care that aligns with their preferences.

During monthly in-home visits with patients, care guides will:

- Use question sets and assessment tools to facilitate discussion of physical, social, psychological, spiritual, cultural, financial, and legal domains
- Assist patients in articulating their preferences, goals, and what matters most; confirming and adjusting on a regular basis
- Explore patient understanding of health status and/or care plan
- Facilitate advance care planning (ACP)
- Connect patients and families to community-based resources and social services

Care guides do this by:

- Developing a long term supportive relationship to recognize and address the changing needs of the patient
- Guiding patients to access care and services that align with goals and preferences as they change over time
- Supporting patients and families when facing difficult decisions
- Communicating with patient's care team and documenting in the electronic health record Collaborating with the care team in recognizing and honoring individual preferences

LifeCourse Impact

Advanced serious illness is a growing and costly concern for many organizations. To date, LifeCourse has touched more than 700 lives in multiple settings including primary and specialty clinics, care management services, and community health centers. Individuals enrolled in LifeCourse have a better quality of life and a better patient care experience compared to usual care.

Since 2012, LifeCourse has actively engaged with patients and families, and achieved the following positive results:

- Increased hospice median length of stay from 17 to 28 days
- 57% decrease in ICU stays
- 27% decrease inpatient days
- 16% fewer ED visits
- 34% more completed advance directives

“LifeCourse is one of the most concerted efforts I’ve seen to really know the patient and family and caregivers in a much deeper way that gives us a chance to personalize care in a way we haven’t been able to do.”

– Eric Coleman, MD, MPH (National expert on Care Transitions)