

**End-Of-Life Poll/JAMA Study  
April 5, 2013**

**KEY FINDINGS**

**For the most part members have not discussed end-of-life issues with their doctors but have done so with their families. In each case, however, the main topics of conversation were DNRs and treatment choices at the end of life.**

**Members strongly consider it their absolute right to refuse treatment or nutrition if they wish. They expect to learn about end-of-life issues from their doctor and from family (and CARP).**

**The Kingston General Hospital-sponsored study in the Journal of the American Medical Association says “three quarters” of elderly patients had talked to their families about end-of-life issues, while, among our members, polled in February 2013, this figure was 61%.**

**In the JAMA study, “most” had not talked with their family doctor, while among our members, 85% had not.**

**The JAMA study says “most” patients wanted a less aggressive protocol of treatment than that that was actually indicated, while among our members, there is an even split between those who want their DNR followed exactly (40%) and those who want the doctor to use his or her judgment (42%).**

## Detailed Findings - End of Life

The majority of members do not plan to discuss end-of-life issues with their doctor (57%), although one quarter plan to in the future (28%). Just one tenth have already (13%).

### *Have you discussed the end of your life with your family doctor?*

<b>YES</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>More than once</b>	5%
<b>Once</b>	8%
<b>NO</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>I will</b>	28%
<b>No plans to</b>	57%
<b>DON'T HAVE FAMILY DOCTOR</b>	3%

In most cases, the topic of the conversation was a DNR order (42%), followed by discussing how wishes would be fulfilled (14%), what treatment options were available at the end of life (12%) and the issue of prolonging life vs just controlling pain (10%).

### *What was the primary topic of this conversation?*

<b>Do Not Resuscitate order (DNR)</b>	42%
<b>Ensuring wishes are fulfilled</b>	14%
<b>Treatment options at end of life</b>	12%
<b>Pain control vs prolonging life</b>	10%
<b>How to decide on end of life treatment options</b>	8%
<b>Prognosis for an existing disease/condition</b>	5%
<b>Doctor's role at end of life</b>	4%
<b>OTHER</b>	5%

The majority of members have talked to family about end-of-life issues (61%), either a spouse (26%) or both spouse and children (24%). Of the one third who have not done so yet (36%), most plan to (22%).

***Have you talked to family members about the end of your life?***

<b>YES</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>Spouse</b>	26%
<b>Children</b>	11%
<b>Both</b>	24%
<b>NO</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>I will</b>	22%
<b>No plans to</b>	14%
<b>DON'T HAVE FAMILY</b>	3%

Once again, the DNR was the primary topic of conversation (30%), followed treatment options at the end of life (20%), assigning a family member as designated decision-maker (15%) or deciding on end-of-life treatment (11%).

***What was the primary topic of this conversation?***

<b>Do Not Resuscitate order (DNR)</b>	30%
<b>Treatment options at end of life</b>	20%
<b>Assign family member as decision-maker</b>	15%
<b>Deciding on end of life treatment</b>	11%
<b>Pain control vs prolonging life</b>	8%
<b>Life expectancy</b>	6%
<b>Eventual cause of death</b>	3%
<b>OTHER</b>	7%

Members are evenly split on whether they want their DNRs followed exactly (40%) or whether they want the doctor to use judgment (42%).

***Do you expect your advanced directive or DNR to be followed exactly as written, or would you want doctors to use their judgment if they thought there was a chance of recovery?***

<b>Doctor to use own judgment if hope of recovery</b>	42%
<b>Expect doctor to follow DNR exactly</b>	40%
<b>DNR is guideline only</b>	18%