

Advance Care Planning Courses

Summer/Fall 2026
August - December

Live Interactive Webinars
(Virtual courses via Zoom)



Advance care planning integrates *what matters most* in the process of “knowing and honoring” preferences and decisions to ensure person-centered decision making.

Built on a foundation of practice- and research-based evidence, Respecting Choices’ Advance Care Planning courses have helped participants become better communicators using motivational interviewing for over 30 years.



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▶ Guide includes the links for course registration

WHICH COURSES SHOULD I TAKE?

Because ACP is not a one-size-fits-all conversation, Respecting Choices courses are tailored to meet the needs of the individuals you work with based on their stage of health.

I strongly value this program and the personable approach taken by Respecting Choices for ACP. There is no way possible to prepare for every medical intervention that could come up and so this approach to finding out what matters most, and the patient's goals, values and wishes is so valuable!

- Amber, PhD, RN

First Steps[®] ACP → If you mostly serve people who are healthy or have early chronic illness.

First Steps ACP is the foundation for weaving ACP discussions into person-centered care and preventive healthcare for all adults. When integrated in the outpatient or community setting, and early in the course of healthcare, First Steps ACP discussions help to normalize the concept of proactive planning, selecting a healthcare agent, providing instructions for goals of care in the event of a severe, permanent brain injury, and the importance of regular review and updating of written plans, such as an advance directive.

Next Steps[™] ACP → If you are part of a health care team that mostly serves people who have serious illness with potential for complications.

The goals of this stage of planning are to assess the individual's understanding of the disease progression (and related treatment options), and to identify goals of care when the illness becomes more advanced. While it is assumed that full care and treatment will continue, the Next Steps ACP conversation helps to clarify when goals of care would shift based on the patient's clarification of unacceptable outcomes. A *Statement of Treatment Preferences (SoTP)* form is used to help individuals understand their options, explore how their goals and values align with the options, and identify their preference for specific treatments to guide the plan of care.

Advanced Steps ACP → If you mostly serve people who are in the last few years of life.

Advance care planning for individuals with serious life-limiting illness is complex and challenging. Advanced Steps ACP incorporates the National POLST into this stage of planning. Achieving desired outcomes of National POLST and goal concordant care requires a systematic approach to integration strategies and shared decision-making conversations. Goals of care conversations in this stage of planning are focused on timely, proactive, and specific treatment discussions that medical orders (such as a POLST form) that align with individual goals, values and preferences which can be followed throughout the continuum of care.

You may choose more than one stage of planning to better serve a broader population.

Respecting Choices offers certification for ACP Facilitators and Instructors associated with specified skills-based educational programs and courses, which include:

- 1) The use of standardized curricula, conversation guides, and materials;
- 2) Competency validation through demonstrated acquisition of knowledge and skills;
- 3) Completion of initial certification requirements; and
- 4) ongoing maintenance of competency.

More information is available at respectingchoices.org/types-of-curriculum-and-certification/

COURSE SCHEDULE

August through December 2026

Please see individual course descriptions and agendas for course times on page 5 - 8.

The **ACP Core Component course** focusing on how to introduce advance care planning and the 'exploration' phase of learning what matters – the first phase of delivering person-centered conversations. Attendees complete skills practice exercises during the virtual course.

- ▶ The ACP Core Component course is a prerequisite for attendance at First Steps, Next Steps, and Advanced Steps ACP Facilitator Certification courses.
- ▶ The ACP Core Component course can also be taken as a stand-alone course by anyone who wants to 1) help people understand the importance of planning ahead for future healthcare decisions, and 2) build their knowledge and skills to facilitate the 'exploration' phase of discerning what matters – the first phase of delivering person-centered conversations.

ACP Core Component Course: Aug. 19, Sep. 1, Oct. 1, Nov. 4 or Dec. 1

First Steps ACP Facilitator Certification Course: Sep. 15, Oct. 15, or Dec. 9

Next Steps ACP Facilitator Certification Course: Oct. 7 or Dec. 15

Advanced Steps ACP Facilitator Certification Course: Sep. 23 or Nov. 17

ACP Design and Integration Course: Oct. 20

ACP Instructor Certification Course (stage-specific): Oct. 28

Facilitator candidates must complete the ACP Core Component course and the ACP Facilitator Certification (Intensive) course(s) in the stage of planning they intend to become certified (First Steps, Next Steps, Advanced Steps).

For certified ACP Facilitators who intend to become certified in another stage of planning: Sign up for the applicable ACP Facilitator Certification (stage-specific Intensive) course. Proof of prior Respecting Choices ACP Facilitator certification is required.

For Instructor candidates: Respecting Choices has developed certification courses to prepare instructors to teach each of its ACP Facilitator Certification Courses locally within their organization or community. To attend a Respecting Choices ACP Instructor Certification course, the Instructor candidate and sponsoring organization must sign an Instructor Agreement to replicate the standardized Respecting Choices ACP Facilitator curriculum. To request the ACP Instructor Agreement *prior* to course registration, please email Respecting Choices at info@respectingchoices.org.

ACP FACILITATOR COURSES

The Respecting Choices ACP Facilitator Certification curriculum has been tested for over 25 years. The goals of this standardized approach to Facilitator certification are to:

- Certify individuals in a competency-based approach to ACP facilitation.
- Ensure the delivery of a consistent and reliable ACP service.

Respecting Choices has adopted a philosophy called “flexibility within a framework” where core elements learned are critical to person-centered conversations (the “framework”) with the ability to adapt how each phase of the conversation proceeds specific to each individual/patient (the “flexibility”).

The ACP Facilitator Certification curriculum is designed to accelerate the process for those who intend to become certified in more than one stage of planning. By building on the skills learned in one ACP Facilitator Certification course, participants can focus on acquiring the knowledge and skills to be agile and critically think how to seamlessly serve individuals where they are at in their disease.

ACP Core Component Course: What Matters Most

The ACP Core Component course is the first component on the *pathway* to Facilitator certification. This course focuses on learning communication skills for facilitating the Exploration Phase of ACP conversations with all individuals. The **Exploration phase of ‘getting to know’ what matters most** lays the groundwork for using that information to align healthcare decisions with what matters most when carried forward to the Goals of Care phase of the conversation to support person-centered decision making. The ACP Core Component course affords an in-depth experience for course participants to practice exploring the individual’s goals, values, and beliefs when having an ACP conversation through role-play exercises. The Exploration phase of facilitated conversations is where “flexibility within a framework” really comes in.

The ACP Core Component course may also be taken as a standalone course by anyone who wants to help promote the importance of planning ahead for future healthcare decisions.

ACP Facilitator Certification Courses (Stage-specific Intensives)

Following the ACP Core Component Course, Facilitator candidates learn how to facilitate the **Goals of Care phase and Decision-Making Framework** of the respective stage-specific ACP conversation (**First Steps, Next Steps, or Advanced Steps**). To achieve ACP Facilitator certification, candidates must complete Respecting Choices Online ACP Facilitator Curriculum, the ACP Core Component course, and the ACP Facilitator Certification course in the stage of planning they are to be certified, including a competency role-play.

ACP CORE COMPONENT COURSE

The ACP Core Component course is intended for professionals and healthcare providers (social workers, nurses, health educators, and physicians), clergy, volunteers, elder law attorneys, and others involved in providing ACP facilitation. This course is appropriate for all levels of knowledge.

The purpose of this course is to assist participants in learning effective communication and conversation skills and techniques for facilitating person-centered conversations with adults, wherever they are in their health care continuum and life span. Participants practice using communication skills and a conversation guide to **explore what matters most** (goals, values, and beliefs) to the individual when planning for future healthcare decisions.

- ▶ ***The ACP Core Component course is a prerequisite for attendance at First Steps, Next Steps, and Advanced Steps ACP Facilitator Certification courses.***
- ▶ ***The ACP Core Component course can also be taken as a stand-alone course for those who are not seeking to become certified as a Facilitator yet want to build their skills to engage and facilitate the 'exploration' phase of discerning what matters – the first phase of delivering person-centered conversations.***

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, the participant will be able to:

1. Identify intended populations for ACP conversations.
2. Verbalize strategies to engage individuals and healthcare agents in ACP.
3. Demonstrate communication skills to promote person-centered ACP conversations.
4. Apply critical thinking to discern what matters most to individuals.

Precourse Requirements/Activities

1. Complete Respecting Choices Online ACP Facilitator Curriculum (modules 1 – 4 for ACP Core Component).
2. Review documents and a short video provided electronically prior to the course.

ACP Core Component Course Agenda At-A-Glance

Times reflect Central Time.

10:00 am – 1:30 pm (CT)

Course

Welcome and Overview

Person-Centered Conversations:
Core Concepts

Skills to Promote Person-Centered Conversations

The Exploration Phase of ACP Conversations
– Part A

Break (15 minutes)

The Exploration Phase of ACP Conversations
– Part B

Role-Play Exercise

Preparation for ACP Facilitator Course(s) for Certification

Adjourn

ACP FACILITATOR CERTIFICATION COURSES (STAGE-SPECIFIC INTENSIVES)

The ACP Facilitator Certification courses (First Steps®, Next Steps™, Advanced Steps) are designed for **participants who intend to become certified ACP Facilitators** to learn the skills needed to facilitate the goals of care phase of ACP conversations with individuals in various stages of health and help to ensure that their goals, values, and beliefs guide all clinical decisions.

These courses are intended for a variety of care professionals (nurses, social workers, health educators, physicians, advanced practice providers, chaplains, clergy, and other care providers), community health workers, end-of-life doulas, and volunteers.

The purpose of these courses is to assist Facilitator candidates to learn effective communication skills, techniques, and critical thinking for facilitating ACP conversations as part of routine care. These conversations have application for in-person visits, group sessions, and telehealth.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, the participant will be able to:

1. Define benefits of (*stage-specific*) ACP conversations and identify appropriate target population.
2. Demonstrate the application of the person-centered decision-making framework to elicit preferences and decisions.
3. Create strategies to transfer individual goals, values, and preferences to a written plan, e.g., advance directive.
4. Demonstrate beginning competency in facilitating (*stage-specific*) ACP conversations through role-play exercises.

Precourse Requirements/Activities

1. Attend the ACP Core Component course.
2. Complete Respecting Choices Online ACP Facilitator Curriculum (modules 1–4 for ACP Core Component and First Steps, modules 1–5 for Advanced Steps, modules 1–6 for Next Steps).
3. Review documents provided electronically prior to the course.

ACP Facilitator Certification Courses (Stage-specific Intensives)

Agenda At-A-Glance

Times reflect Central Time.

First Steps ACP Course
10:00 am – 2:00 pm (CT)

Next Steps ACP Course
10:00 am – 3:15 pm (CT)

Advanced Steps ACP Course
10:00 am – 3:00 pm (CT)

Welcome and Overview

Eliciting Preference
and Decisions:
Goals of Care Phase

Decision-Making
Framework for
(*Stage-Specific*)
ACP Conversations

Break (15 minutes)

Role-Play Exercise

Documenting Preferences
and Decisions of
ACP Conversations

Break (15 minutes)

Achieving ACP Facilitator
Certification: Competency
Role-Play Exercise

Adjourn

ACP DESIGN & INTEGRATION COURSE

The purpose of the Respecting Choices Design and Integration course is to build skills to design an effective program with the goal of integrating person-centered decision making as a standard of care. The course is organized around a framework that supports keeping the promises/processes necessary for a sustainable program. The course blends in workgroup activities that give the learner the freedom to adapt the elements to be effective in their specific program.

The course is intended for healthcare and community leaders (administrators, managers, program directors, ACP coordinators, and others) and clinicians (physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses, social workers, and others) who are interested in integrating an effective ACP program within their organization or community. This course is appropriate for all levels of knowledge.

NOTE: *The ACP Design and Integration course is a prerequisite to attend a stage-specific ACP Instructor Certification course.*

Individuals seeking Instructor certification benefit from learning the systems approach to support the certified Facilitator role as essential members of the interprofessional team.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, the participant will be able to:

1. Describe the Respecting Choices evidence-based, systematic approach to creating a sustainable person-centered decision making (PCDM) program.
2. Identify five promises, when kept, that integrate PCDM into standard practice.
3. Define four design elements that support keeping each promise, including measuring success of PCDM programs.
4. Explain the role of leadership in accomplishing the goals of PCDM.
5. Apply knowledge and use toolkits adaptable to design workflows and plans specific to your program.

ACP Design and Integration Course Agenda At-A-Glance

Times reflect Central Time.

10:00 am – 2:00 pm (CT)
Course

Welcome and Overview

What is Person-Centered Decision Making (PCDM)?

Five Promises Required to Build a PCDM Program

Infrastructure Requirements to Keep Each Promise:

Promise 1:

We will initiate conversations.

Break (15 minutes)

Promise 2:

We will provide assistance with PCDM.

Promises 3 and 4:

Plans will be clear; plans will be stored and updated.

Promise 5:

We will use plans to honor preferences and decisions.

Transforming the Healthcare Culture:
The Role of Leadership

Summary

Adjourn

ACP INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION COURSES (STAGE-SPECIFIC)

The ACP Instructor Certification course features strategies for teaching, evaluating, and mentoring the communication skills of ACP Facilitators, and prepares participants to teach the stage-specific ACP Facilitator Certification course (First Steps, Next Steps, Advanced Steps). This course is intended for healthcare educators, nurses, physicians, community leaders, social workers, and chaplains and clergy who are interested in becoming certified to replicate the stage-specific ACP Facilitator Certification course(s) in their own organization or community.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, the participant will be able to:

1. Define Instructor responsibilities and common strategies for teaching the Respecting Choices stage-specific ACP Facilitator Certification course.
2. Facilitate a brief discussion on a selected ACP topic.
3. Apply three mentoring strategies to promote Facilitator certification and maintenance of competence.
4. Apply at least three Instructor mentoring strategies during role-play activities.

Precourse Requirements/Activities

1. Attend the Design and Integration course.
2. Be certified as the stage-specific ACP Facilitator.
3. Review documents provided electronically prior to the course.

Instructor Agreement

To attend a Respecting Choices ACP Instructor Certification course, the Instructor candidate and sponsoring organization must sign an agreement to replicate the standardized Respecting Choices ACP Facilitator curriculum. If no sponsor organization, the Instructor candidate may sign an agreement independently. Individuals from countries other than the U.S. cannot be certified as Respecting Choices Instructors unless part of a license agreement with an organization. If interested in becoming certified as an Instructor, contact Respecting Choices at info@respectingchoices.org.

ACP Instructor Certification Courses (Stage-specific)

Agenda At-A-Glance

Times reflect Central Time.

8:30 am – 4:30 pm (CT)
Course

Welcome and Overview

Preparing to Teach your Own ACP Facilitator Certification Course

Teaching and Presentation Strategies

Certification Exam

Break (15 minutes)

Instructor-Led Discussions

Lunch (30 minutes)

The Role of the Instructor in Promoting Facilitator Certification and Maintenance of Competence

Small Group Activities to Practice Giving Feedback

Break (15 minutes)

Group Debrief and Summary

Adjourn

CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) INFORMATION

Nursing Contact Hours

This nursing professional development activity was approved by the Wisconsin Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. Nurses completing these courses receive contact hours as noted below.

Social Work CE Credits

Respecting Choices, #1610, is approved as an ACE provider to offer social work continuing education by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program. Regulatory boards are the final authority on courses accepted for continuing education credit. ACE provider approval period: May 14, 2025–May 14, 2028. Social workers completing these courses receive general continuing education credits as noted below.

The total number of [nursing contact hours](#) or [social work CE credits](#) that a participant can earn for successful completion of the courses:

Live, interactive (virtual) Courses - Nursing and Social Work CE Credits	
ACP Core Component course	3.25
First Steps [®] ACP Facilitator Certification course	3.5
Next Steps [™] ACP Facilitator Certification course	4.75
Advanced Steps ACP Facilitator Certification course	4.5
ACP Design and Integration course (<i>Social Work CE Credit available only</i>)	3.75
ACP Instructor Certification courses (First Steps [®] , Next Steps [™] , Advanced Steps)	7.0
To receive CE credit/certificate of completion, nurses and social workers must: 1) Complete precourse requirements/activities identified for the course; 2) Be present for the entire course (no partial credit will be given); and 3) Complete online evaluation. CE certificates will be sent following online submission of course evaluation within 30 days of attendance.	
Online ACP Facilitator Curriculum - Nursing Contact Hours and Social Work CE Credits	
Modules 1 – 4 (total of 6.25 hours); Modules 1 – 5 (total of 8.0 hours); Modules 1 – 6 (total of 9.75 hours)	
After completing each online module and evaluation, eligible learners will receive CE certificates for the total contact hours or continuing education credits. Verification of online module completion occurs electronically prior to the applicable course(s).	

Planning Committee and Speakers

Patrice Tadel, MSN, RN; Kathleen Ziemba, MSW, LCSW; Rose Seavolt, BSN, RN, CCP; and Joyce Smerick, BS

We are a provider of the course, but we do not endorse any commercial products in conjunction with the course. Off-label use of any products will not be discussed.

Respecting Choices Instructors include, but are not limited to:

Barbara Gunning PhD, RN; Nancy Greenstreet, LCSW, ACHP-SW; Rose Seavolt, BSN, RN, CCP; Joyce Smerick, BS; Patrice Tadel, MSN, RN; Kathleen Ziemba, MSW. Information is available at respectingchoices.org/about-us/team/. Instructors for each course are at the discretion of Respecting Choices and may be subject to change, including replacement with qualified substitutes. Up-to-date information regarding speakers is available by emailing info@respectingchoices.org.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registrations are accepted up to **one week** before the course offering. Please see the last page of this catalog for the *Registration Guide to National Courses* with the link to begin your registration. You will be prompted to sign into **Respecting Choices Online Learning in Absorb** or create an account if you don't have one. From there, you will be able to select and purchase your courses.

Course	General Fee
ACP Core Component (<i>Fee includes Online ACP Facilitator Curriculum</i>)	\$200
First Steps® ACP Facilitator Certification	\$300
Next Steps™ ACP Facilitator Certification	\$350
Advanced Steps ACP Facilitator Certification	\$350
ACP Design & Integration	\$250
ACP Instructor Certification (First Steps, Next Steps or Advanced Steps)	\$525
<i>Fees include course instruction, electronic access to course materials, and continuing education credit for nursing and social work as applicable.</i>	

Live Interactive Webinar Virtual Course Participation

Full attendance and engagement throughout the entire course are required. Prior to the registered virtual course(s), registrants will receive the Zoom meeting invitation, login information, links to precourse activities, and instructions to download and print course materials. Each attendee must log on individually on a computer with working audio, video, and internet access. Attendees must complete skills practice exercises during the virtual course to achieve certification. Please contact Respecting Choices with any questions or considerations.

Accommodations

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Respecting Choices is committed to making national courses accessible to all. If you require special assistance/accommodations, please contact Respecting Choices at 608-473-1025 or info@respectingchoices.org.

Cancellation and Transfer Policy

We offer a full refund minus a \$50 administrative fee for cancellations made more than 30 days prior the course date. Seating is limited, so registrations canceled within 30 days of the course date are not refunded. If **Online ACP Facilitator Curriculum** modules are started, the cost of the modules will also be deducted from your refund. Individual registrations can be transferred to a future course date. Registrations cannot be transferred to another person. Registrations must be canceled according to the cancellation policy and a new registration submitted.

Grievances/Comments/Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns about these courses, please contact Kathleen Ziemba, Senior Director of Respecting Choices, at 608-473-3504 or kziemba@respectingchoices.org.

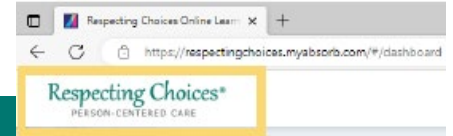
REGISTRATION GUIDE TO RESPECTING CHOICES NATIONAL COURSES

Register for the Respecting Choices® virtual national courses through the Respecting Choices online learning management system (LMS). You will need to “preregister” before proceeding with your course registration. This guide will assist you with your course selection(s) and purchase.

SIGN INTO RESPECTING CHOICES ONLINE LEARNING ACCOUNT IN ABSORB

- If you **do not** yet have a Respecting Choices Online Learning account, click on this [enrollment link](#) to create your account and proceed to preregistration. <https://respectingchoices.myabsorb.com/?KeyName=National.Course.Pre-Registration>
- If you have an **existing** Respecting Choices Online Learning account, click on this [login link](#) to sign in and proceed to preregistration. <https://respectingchoices.myabsorb.com/#/login>
- At the Home Dashboard, scroll down to see “**My Courses**” and “**Featured Courses.**” If you do not see these sections, click on the [Respecting Choices](#) logo in the upper left corner to refresh the page.
- Under '**Featured Courses**' are all available national course offerings.
- Click on “**Enroll**” and then “**Start**” in the “> **RC National Course Preregistration**” box. This short online questionnaire needs to be completed prior to purchasing courses.
- After completing the preregistration, you may begin selecting your desired course(s) to add to your shopping cart.

To return to the Home Dashboard at any time, click on the [Respecting Choices](#) logo in the upper left corner.

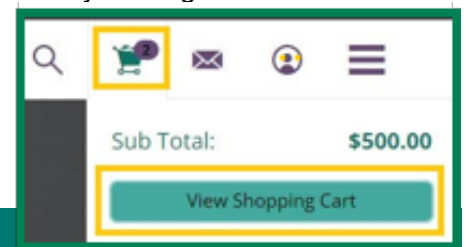


REGISTER FOR COURSES

- Click on one course offering at a time that you would like to attend, then select your desired session date.
- Review the **Course Content** for course description and precourse requirements. Find a complete list of courses with details above.

Remember,

- **If you want to become a certified Facilitator**, you must attend the *ACP Core Component* course prior to attending one of the stage-specific *ACP Facilitator Certification* courses (First Steps, Next Steps, Advanced Steps). If you previously attended an ACP Core Component course, please indicate this on the preregistration form when prompted.
 - **If you want to become a certified Instructor**, you must become certified as the stage-specific ACP Facilitator and attend a *Design & Integration* course. You will need to submit a signed [ACP Instructor Agreement](#) prior to attending the *ACP Instructor Certification* course. If you are already certified as a Respecting Choices Facilitator and/or Instructor in another stage of planning, please indicate on the preregistration form when prompted.
- Once you add a course to your shopping cart, you can close that selection screen by clicking on the “**X**” in the upper right corner or return to the Home Dashboard.
 - Continue selecting all the courses and dates you desire and add them to your shopping cart.
 - When finished, click on the shopping cart icon in the toolbar at the top of the screen and click the “**View Shopping Cart**” button.



FINALIZE YOUR PURCHASE

- On the Shopping Cart screen, you will see the courses you have selected along with the option of adding a Coupon Code. Add a coupon code if you have one and click on “**Proceed to Checkout**” button.
 - Respecting Choices Prime members: Enter the coupon code to receive the discounted rate.
- On the next screen, confirm you are logged into your account and click on “**Proceed to Checkout**” button. Confirm your shipping information and select if also your billing address. Click on “**Proceed to Checkout**” button.
- Select “**Credit Card**” as payment method and click on “**Proceed to Checkout**” button. Confirm your billing address, enter credit card information, and click on “**Submit Your Order**” when ready. You will receive a confirmation email upon successful registration!

If you do not receive a confirmation email and/or if you have any questions during registration, please contact Respecting Choices at info@respectingchoices.org or (608) 473-1025.