

NAVIGATING DIFFICULT DECISIONS

Dr. Paul Guidry, Medical Director



Your family member is a critically ill patient in the nursing home. They are no longer responsive and invasive interventions may offer little hope for recovery. Your family is distraught, torn between clinging to hope and respecting your loved one's wishes. This is where Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) orders play a crucial role in navigating complex end-of-life decision.

A DNR order is a documented medical instruction that directs healthcare professionals to withhold cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in the event of cardiac or respiratory arrest. It is not a blanket refusal of all care, but rather a specific decision regarding life-sustaining interventions during emergencies. DNR orders can be placed based on a patient's wishes, expressed through advance directives like living wills or through discussions with their designated healthcare proxy. Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) orders are more than just legal documents:

they are powerful tools for respecting patient autonomy, alleviating suffering, and promoting ethical and resource-conscious care. However, despite their undeniable benefits, utilization of DNR orders across nursing homes remains suboptimal.

For patients facing serious illnesses or chronic conditions, DNR orders become crucial tools for navigating end-of-life care. They respect patient autonomy, ensuring wishes regarding resuscitation align with patient values and goals. In many cases, attempting CPR in these situations can be ineffective, painful, and prolong suffering. DNR orders can therefore promote comfort and dignity by prioritizing palliative care approaches that focus on symptom management and emotional support.

Here at Garden Park, we are committed to your loved one and want the very best for them in health and at the end of life. End-of-life care decisions can be difficult ones to make. These decisions require careful consideration, engagement, and open communication which lead to clear shared decision making through exchange of comprehensive information regarding:

- The patient's current medical needs
- The patient's values surrounding end-of-life care
- The benefits and limitations of proceeding with or foregoing heroic measures versus comfort measures when appropriate

We invite you to participate in this important discussion and our trained staff can help guide you in these decisions.

"Spring is nature's way of saying let's party!"
- Robin Williams



♥ We celebrated lasting love by honoring our precious couples with a candlelight dinner on Valentine's Day. ♥



CELEBRATING BREAKFAST

Pancakes and Pajamas

"I love it! We've never done anything like this before, it was different and fun. Y'all get an A+" exclaimed former teacher, Diane Washington. We celebrated National Hot Breakfast Month in February with our Senior Leaders cooking pancakes and bacon. Despite the old saying that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, it is an easy meal to skip. Our residents enjoy hot breakfast every day, so we decided to celebrate the "holiday" in our pajamas. The dining room was filled with laughter as the residents and staff enjoyed the novelty of having specialty coffees and fresh juices served by Senior Leaders that could have just rolled out of bed. While wearing her comfy robe our Business Office Manager, Jennifer Rhodes shared, *"I enjoyed our team working together to serve the residents and staff. I think our staff is top notch and works together like a well-oiled (or in the case well-buttered)*

machine. Is our team the best? You BUTTER believe it!"

Eight new griddles were christened for the festive event and the smell of bacon wafted through the building. Hundreds of pancakes were flipped so that all the residents and staff could enjoy a special meal.



Mr. Talbot said, *"I loved breakfast. The pancakes were cooked perfectly. This was my number one breakfast!"*

It is difficult to know if the pajamas or the pancakes should get the credit, but everyone's mood was lifted. Tammy Brown, our Director of Nursing said, *"Breakfast is always fuel to the soul to help start the day off right. I was surprised and happy to see so many residents enjoying the hot pancakes and bacon... the smiles and the laughter made for priceless moments! The teamwork at Garden Park is always amazing! They get the job done."*



REACHING REHAB GOALS

The Pleasure of Food

When Mr. Pittman admitted to Garden Park he was only able to receive his nutrition through a tube in his stomach. He shared with his Speech Therapist that his main goal was to be able to eat normal food again. His reasoning was not just because he missed being able to eat, but he also missed sharing meals with his wife. We often take for granted the social aspect of dining with family and friends. Sitting around a table socializing and breaking bread together is a large part of the human experience. It is often how we meet new people and

strengthen relationships. When someone has to use a tube for their primary means of nutrition and hydration, they often feel isolated during meal times and miss the experience of gathering with friends. Knowing Mr. Pittman's goal to return to eating, speech therapy worked with him targeting his swallowing deficits; both parties putting in every effort each session to get him to his goal as quickly as possible. Due to their efforts, he was able to upgrade from his PEG tube to eating regular foods within four weeks of starting speech therapy. His smiles at every special event, especially the Valentine's Dinner with his wife, are evidence of his rehab success!

