

Advance care planning cuts burden of decision making

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(HealthDay)—Prior advance care planning cuts surrogates' decision-making burden, according to a study published online Aug. 4 in the *Annals of the American Thoracic Society*.

Jared Chiarchiaro, M.D., from the University of Pittsburgh, and colleagues measured decisional conflict in 471 [surrogates](#) of 257 patients with acute respiratory distress syndrome to determine whether prior [advance care planning](#) is associated with less decisional conflict, as measured by the Decisional Conflict Scale.

The researchers found that moderate or high levels of decisional conflict (score ≥ 25) were present in 48 percent of surrogates. Surrogates who had engaged in prior advance care planning conversations had

significantly lower levels of decisional conflict, compared to those who had not, even after adjusting for potential confounders.

"These results suggest that the scope of benefit of advance care planning may extend beyond respecting patients' wishes to also ameliorate the burden placed on patients' loved ones who act as surrogates," the authors write.

More information: [Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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