



Improving End-Of-Life Care

(NAPSA)—A growing number of Americans are looking for better ways to face the emotional and practical realities posed by a serious illness and the prospect of death.

While the efforts may seem difficult, they are actions that more people will need to take each year. The Social Security Administration projects that by 2010, over one million Americans will lose their spouses annually. That number is expected to grow to more than one-and-a-half million by 2030 and does not include deaths of partners in nontraditional relationships.

Many people dealing with end-of-life issues seek ways to balance high-tech medical interventions with comfort and compassionate care. Others are trying to achieve a sense of dignity or meaning.

No matter what a person's goal, doctors say education can be an important tool when making end-of-life decisions. For example, a free online course called "Finding Our Way: Living with Dying in America—The Online Course" can help people by providing practical information on advanced illness and end-of-life issues.

The self-paced course is part of the "Finding Our Way" national public education initiative and is based upon a national newspaper series of the same name. The series explored subjects that face seriously ill Americans, their caregivers and families. The course builds on each of the newspaper articles with discussion questions, unique author insights and additional resources.

The course also lets participants access the posted thoughts and



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A free online course can help people deal with serious illness.

insights of those who previously completed "Finding Our Way." In addition, it lets users interact daily with fellow participants.

All course materials are on the Web and participants are encouraged to contribute to online discussions and take short quizzes. The course can be started at any time of year.

The online course is at www.scu.edu/fow. People can find the newspaper series at the Web site www.findingourway.net.

The "Finding Our Way" collaborative project is coordinated by the Partnership for Caring and the Center for Advanced Illness Coordinated Care. The newspaper series was written by experts from a number of fields and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the FanFox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation and the Charitable Leadership Foundation.