



# End of Life Attitudes in California

## FACTS

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As California's population ages, there are many questions surrounding the difficult and sensitive issue of medical care at the End of Life (EOL). Our healthcare system is trying to change how we view End of Life by developing hospice programs for the terminally ill and palliative care programs to provide comfort and support when medical intervention is no longer an option.

The information below is the result of a statewide survey of a diverse group of Californians, along with focus groups conducted by the California HealthCare Foundation and the California Coalition for Compassionate Care. Below are highlights of the survey results on EOL:

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- 83% of adults believe it's "somewhat" or "very important" to write down their EOL wishes, but only 31% have done so.
- Pain and discomfort top the list of concerns people consider when they think about dying.
- 62% of California residents worry that they won't be able to get or pay for the needed care towards the End of Life.
- 7 out of 10 Californians die in hospitals and nursing homes, even though surveys show they want to die at home.
- More than 50% of Californians who lost a loved one in the past 5 years were involved in the care or medical decision-making of their loved one.
- 80% of Californians would not want to be kept alive on life support if they were in a coma with no hope of significant recovery.
- California minority communities have done less advance care planning than Whites.
- Latino and Asian Californians tend to be less comfortable talking about death and dying, and have given less thought to their wishes for EOL medical treatment.
- Latino, Asian, and African-American Californians are less likely to say their loved ones know their wishes, less likely to have talked to their loved ones about their wishes, and to have something in writing.
- 71% of Californians have heard of hospice care; only 32% know a lot about it. Older Californians, Whites and those of higher economic levels report more familiarity with hospice than others.
- 41% of white Californians are more likely than Latinos (32%) or African-Americans (21%) to say their loved ones received hospice care.

Source: End-of-Life Issues and Care in California, Statewide survey of 1,778 adults, conducted by Lake Research Partners for the California HealthCare foundation, March to April 2006  
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### **Mission Statement**

*To provide leadership and assistance to renal dialysis and transplant facilities in a manner that supports continuous improvement in patient care, outcomes, safety and satisfaction.*

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