

## VEN Announces NEW Advance Care Planning Community Outreach Coordinator

BY CINDY BRUZZESE

Vermont Ethics Network (VEN) has hired a new part-time Advance Care Planning Community Outreach Coordinator to expand our *Taking Steps Vermont* initiative. The goal of this newly created position is to increase awareness of advance care planning (ACP) across the state and to inspire the broader Vermont community to be more proactive in planning for future medical decisions. We believe collaborating with organizations and individuals who are currently engaged in this work and encouraging other organizations to join us will enable us to expand awareness and utilization of the *Taking Steps Vermont* stepwise approach to advance care planning. In partnership with local champions, we hope to foster a common language about medical decision-making and inspire individuals and communities across the state to have conversations and to document their priorities around their future healthcare needs.

### **Taking Who's Your Person?...** **What's Your Plan? on the Road**

In 2015, VEN developed print materials for our *Taking Steps Vermont: Who's Your Person?...What's Your Plan?* program. Using these materials, a collective of eight organizations in Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties and the Vermont Ethics Network have been working to increase advance care planning awareness and engagement in that region under the *Who's Your Person?...What's Your Plan?* banner. The response from the public has been very positive. It seems we have found a message and an ACP engagement process that resonates.

Through VEN's new statewide coordinator we envision sharing ACP materials, resources, messaging and successful strategies to engage individuals, businesses and other groups more broadly across the state. It is our goal to train



*Nina Thompson*

and support community presentation facilitators who can respond locally to requests for workshops on advance directives. Additionally, we hope to provide general coordination, information sharing and statewide marketing to bolster local organization initiatives and statewide efforts toward realizing a shared goal—that all decisional adult Vermonters have the opportunity to complete an advance directive and communicate their preferences and priorities with friends, family and health care providers.

### **Meet Nina Thompson**

We are excited to announce Nina Thompson as VEN's new Community Outreach Coordinator. Nina comes to us well prepared to take on this vital mission. She founded and led the Wake Up to Dying Project from 2012 through 2017. Before joining VEN this August, she consulted with national and local organizations working in the burgeoning end-of-life awareness movement. Nina brings 23 years of entrepreneurial and business-consulting experience to the position. She is well skilled in community organizing, project management, event production, campaign work and organizational development. Nina draws her passion and capacity for this work from her experience with the Wake Up to Dying project, hospice and chaplaincy volunteer work and Zen meditation practice.

Nina is very excited to bring her years of experience to VEN's very clear goal of encouraging everyone who is 18 years old or older to appoint a health care agent—*Who's your person?* And to engage, anyone who is ready, in a discussion about their future health care needs—*What's your plan?* If you are already an ACP activist and you are currently doing awareness building, public education and/or have related efforts underway in your community we want to hear from you! Email Nina at [nthompson@vtethicsnetwork.org](mailto:nthompson@vtethicsnetwork.org) or call us at 802.828.2909.

# HEALTH DECISIONS

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*The mission of the  
Vermont Ethics Network  
is to promote ethics as  
a core component of  
health care and health care  
decision-making*

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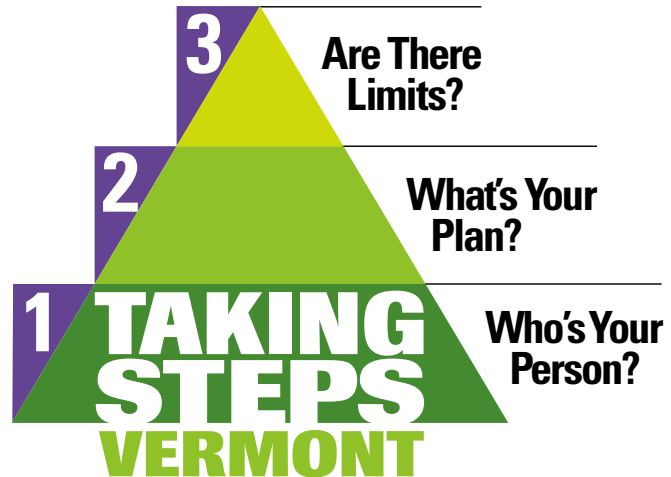
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*Who's Your Person? ... What's Your Plan?*

**TAKING  
STEPS  
VERMONT**

## Start Taking Steps Today!

**Make 2019 your advance care planning year! Have conversations with friends and family about what matters most to you and document your decisions in an advance directive.**



### STEP 1: WHO'S YOUR PERSON?

*For adults 18 years of age or older*

Complete an **advance directive** to appoint a **Health Care Agent**, also known as a health care proxy or power of attorney for health care, to make medical decisions if you are unable to speak for yourself.

### STEP 2: WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

*For adults with chronic illness or those seeking to give more specific information about their values and healthcare preferences*

Complete an **advance directive** with detailed information about your **health care goals and treatment priorities** to provide guidance for your family, friends and health care providers in times of critical illness or serious injury.

### STEP 3: ARE THERE LIMITS?

*For individuals who are seriously ill or dying, or who are certain they would not want life-prolonging interventions*

Consider talking with your clinician about **Medical Orders** to limit the use of life-sustaining treatment at the end-of-life.



# Recent Updates to the Vermont Advance Directive Statute

In May of 2018, recent changes to [Vermont's Advance Directive Statute](#) went into effect. The goal of these changes was to expand access to advance care planning opportunities for all individuals, regardless of what setting they are in or who is providing their care.

The changes to Vermont's law resulted in three major improvements:

- Allowing clinicians who are licensed in another state to sign a DNR/COLST order for a Vermont patient who is being treated in the state in which the clinician is licensed and where the patient is located at the time the order is written.
- Expanding the group of individuals who are authorized to serve as an explainer on an advance directive for people who are being admitted to or already reside in nursing homes and residential care facilities.
- Clarifying the general witnessing requirements for people completing advance directive documents.

Vermont's advance directive law now explicitly states that **a health care provider may serve as a witness to an advance directive and the explainer of an advance directive** (required for people who are being admitted or already reside in a nursing home, residential care facility or hospital) **can serve as one of the two (2) required witnesses.**

In addition to these clarifications, the complete list of explainers for nursing homes and residential care facilities now includes:

- An ombudsman;
- A recognized member of the clergy;
- An attorney licensed to practice in this State;
- A Probate Division of the Superior Court designee;
- **An individual designated by a hospital** pursuant to subsection 9709(d) of the AD statute (a designated hospital explainer can now go to a nursing home or residential care facility and serve as the explainer in that setting);
- A *mental health* patient representative;
- **An individual who is volunteering at the nursing home or residential care facility without compensation and has received appropriate training** regarding the explanation of advance directives;\* or
- **A clinician, as long as the clinician is not employed by the nursing home or residential care facility at the time of the explanation.**

*\*Nursing homes who choose to use volunteers must ensure that the volunteers have received appropriate training regarding the explanation of advance directives.*

## Register Your Advance Directive with the Vermont Advance Directive Registry

The Vermont Advance Directive Registry (VADR) is a secure online database that stores copies of completed advance directive forms. This is a free service for Vermont residents who wish to register their advance directive and allow for improved access to health care decisions at a time of incapacity.

To register an advance directive simply complete the [Registration Agreement](#), attach a copy of your advance directive document to the registration agreement and mail or fax the forms to:

**Vermont Advance Directive Registry (VADR)**  
**PO Box 2789 • Westfield, NJ 07091-2789**  
**FAX to: 908-654-1919**

Within about two weeks after sending in your documents, you will receive a confirmation letter with a username and password from the Vermont Advance Directive Registry. This letter will contain a wallet ID card with your registration ID number and stickers for your driver's license. For more information about registering advance directives visit [www.vtethicsnetwork.org](http://www.vtethicsnetwork.org) or call us at (802) 828-2909.

— VERMONT ETHICS NETWORK PRESENTS —

# Listening, Language & the Power of Truth-Telling



*In partnership with the Palliative Care & Pain Management Task Force*

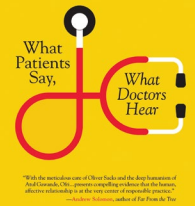
Wednesday, May 29, 2019 • 8:00 a.m.— 4:00 p.m.  
DoubleTree by Hilton (formerly the Sheraton) • Burlington, Vermont

FEATURED PLENARY TALKS BY:



**Danielle Ofri, MD, PhD, D.Litt, FACP**, is an internist at the medical clinic of Bellevue Hospital, the oldest public hospital in the country. She is a founder and Editor-in-Chief of the [Bellevue Literary Review](#), and is on the faculty of New York University School of Medicine. Her newest book is [What Patients Say; What Doctors Hear](#), an exploration of doctor-patient communication and how refocusing the conversation between doctors and patients can improve health outcomes. Danielle Ofri writes regularly for the [New York Times](#) and [Slate Magazine](#) about medicine and the doctor-patient relationship.

Danielle Ofri, MD



Her essays have also appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Atlantic*, the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the *Lancet*, CNN and on National Public Radio.



**Terry Altilio, MSW, LCSW, ACSW** is a palliative social work consultant with over two decades of experience working with patients and families in hospital settings. She lectures in post masters social work programs at New York University, Smith and California State University San Marcos. She is a recipient of a Project on Death in America Career Achievement Award and a Social Work Leadership Award which supported a palliative social work fellowship and listserv which currently links 750 social workers. She has received a Mayday Pain and Society Fellowship Award and a Social Worker of the Year award from the Association of Oncology Social Work. She has co-authored publications, lectured nationally and internationally and is co-editor with Shirley Otis-Green of the Oxford Textbook of Palliative Social Work and most recently co-editor with Bridget Sumser and Meaghan Lyon Leimena of *Palliative Care—A Guide for Health Social Workers* published in January 2019.

CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS COVERING:

- Communication about Prognosis
- Handling Emotions & Denial
- Pediatric Considerations

Online registration & the complete agenda will be available soon at:  
[www.vtethicsnetwork.org](http://www.vtethicsnetwork.org)

**SAVE THE DATE NOW**

Applications for 5.0 credits through Northern VT AHEC are in process

**Registration Fees**

General Registration: \$165.00 (includes CME/CEU)  
Student & No-Continuing Ed. Credit: \$135.00  
Group Rates Available for Groups of Five or More  
General Registration for Group: \$135 (with credits);  
\$115 (no credits/student)

# Meet the Newest VEN Board Members

## Ernest Tobias (Toby) Balivet, JD

Toby grew up primarily in Danville, Vermont. He attended Sterling School in Craftsbury ('66), Harvard College ('70) and University of Maine School of Law ('73). He clerked for the Vermont Supreme Court, and was a staff attorney for the National Center for State Courts, before establishing a private practice in Danville in 1976. He served also as Caledonia Probate Judge for 20 years (1999–2019), and continues in private practice. His outside interests include choral music, classical guitar, community and home culinary projects and local history. He has two sons, Adam, a freelance writer, and Aaron, a Chinese scholar.

## Linda Cohen, JD, MHCDS

Linda Cohen is a regulatory healthcare attorney at Dinse working alongside healthcare organizations and providers to navigate the evolution from fee-for-service to value-based reimbursement. She works regularly with accountable care organizations and brings a deep level of understanding of the barriers faced beyond the law itself, including cultural, financial, operational, employment, privacy and technological. She works collaboratively with clients to overcome these barriers with an orientation toward solutions. She has substantial experience in reimbursement issues involving both governmental and commercial payers as well as federal and state regulatory compliance. To read Linda's complete bio go to: <https://www.dinse.com/people/linda-j-cohen/>

## Linda A. Hurley, MS, RN

For the past 18 years Linda has worked for Springfield Hospital in Springfield Vermont. In May of 2000 she became the Director of Education and is currently Director of Professional Development. Linda manages the Specialty Clinic and is the Director of Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation. She has worn several different hats for the hospital, serving as the Corporate Compliance Officer for two years (2002-2004) and managing the Child Birth Center on two different occasions. Linda has been the Chairman of the Ethics Committee for 18 years. Prior to this she served on two other Medical Surgical Hospitals Ethics Committee, one Psychiatric Hospital's Ethics Committee and on an Academic Institution Ethics Committee.

Linda received a BS degree from the University of Massachusetts—Amherst in 1983, in Hotel, Restaurant and Travel Administration. She then obtained an Associates of Science Degree in Nursing from Holyoke Community College in June of 1988. She received a Master's of Science Degree in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing from Russell Sage College in Troy, New York in 1993. She currently studies French at Express Fluency in Brattleboro, Vermont.

## Kier Olsen DeVries, MA

Inspired by a family dilemma over how to handle the care of her dying grandmother, Kier Olsen DeVries self-designed an interdisciplinary major in Ethics at Smith College and then studied Bioethics in the PhD program in Philosophy at Georgetown University. During that time, she was a member of the board at a Maryland hospice and co-wrote her first published article, on the SUPPORT intervention. In 1999, still engaged in her dissertation (on end-of-life decision-making through a feminist lens), she moved to Vermont.

Editing and research assistant work at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics throughout graduate school led to a position at the Ethics Institute at Dartmouth, where she worked for ten years. For several of those years, she served on the ethics advisory board of a Boston company doing stem cell research. In 2002, she began writing and editing for an online international network focused on communication for social change, where she is Senior Editor and Editor of their flagship e-magazine. She occasionally freelances for professors whose work she edited in the past, with *Religion and the Newborn* (forthcoming, Oxford University Press) being a recent example.

Kier is deeply involved in the community of Windsor. In 2010, a local minister nominated her to serve on the Mt. Ascutney Windsor Regional Ethics Committee as a representative of the Ministerium, a position she still holds. In 2014, Kier took part in a lay chaplaincy training program at the hospital, and, since then, she has loyally visited with elderly residents each Sunday at Historic Homes of Runnamede (HHR). She also serves as a member of the HHR board.

## John Saroyan, MD, FAAP, HMDCB

Dr. John Saroyan has dedicated his entire medical career to hospice and palliative care. He was a full-time faculty member at Columbia University for ten years, where he was Program Director for the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship and attained the rank of Associate Clinical Professor. He is a board certified pediatrician with sub-specialty certification in Hospice and Palliative Medicine, and is a Certified™ Hospice Medical Director. In the 2013 he became the Physician Medical Director for BAYADA Hospice in Vermont and New Hampshire. His expertise extends across the lifespan.

A well-published scholar with multiple [peer-reviewed publications](#), Dr. Saroyan maintains faculty appointments in the Department of Medicine at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College and the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Vermont College of Medicine. He has been quoted in the *New York Times* because of his widely recognized expertise in both pediatric palliative and hospice care; called an “emerging leader” by the State

Initiatives in End-of-Life Care; and featured in an online interview by blogger Laurie Kienlin. In 2018 Dr. Saroyan received the prestigious [Hastings Center Cunniff-Dixon Mid-level Physician award](#).

He joined the Vermont Ethics Network Board in 2017 and has been a member of the Mt. Ascutney Multi-site Ethics committee since 2013, having become co-chair in 2015.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### RURAL ETHICS NETWORK MEETING

April 8, 2019 • 10:00–11:30 AM

Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Auditorium G  
Precedes the 49th Meeting of the NH/VT Ethics Committee (see announcement below).

 Dartmouth-Hitchcock

# The 49th Meeting of the NH/VT Ethics Committees: Health Care Privacy in the Age of Twitter



**April 8, 2019 • 11:45 am – 4:00 pm**

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Auditorium G, Lebanon, New Hampshire

**REGISTER ONLINE: [HTTP://MED.DARTMOUTH-HITCHCOCK.ORG/CE](http://med.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/ce)**

## OVERVIEW

Although policies such as HIPAA delineate professional boundaries in health care, the ethical boundaries between one's personal and professional life may not be as clearly defined when it comes to social media. This conference aims to explore the ethical conflicts that arise in the world of social media when personal and professional boundaries collide.

## LEARNING OUTCOME(S)

At the conclusion of this learning activity, participants will be able to discuss at least two ethical challenges that arise when professional life and personal boundaries collide in social media.

## ACCREDITATION

Dartmouth-Hitchcock is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians. Dartmouth-Hitchcock designates this live activity for a maximum of 3.25 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should

claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity. Dartmouth-Hitchcock Nursing Continuing Education Council is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. This educational activity carries 3.25 contact hours. Application for social work continuing education credits has been submitted, please email [Amanda.E.Sanchez@hitchcock.org](mailto:Amanda.E.Sanchez@hitchcock.org) to check on the status.

## REGISTRATION

The registration fee is \$45. NEAH members are \$22.50. Dartmouth-Hitchcock employees and member organizations, D-H and Member Organization Ethics committee members as well as UVM Ethics committee members and Community members of ethics committees can attend at no charge, but advance registration is required for planning purposes.

To register: <http://med.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/ce>

For registration questions, please call (603) 653-1234 or email [clpd.support@hitchcock.org](mailto:clpd.support@hitchcock.org).