
Physician Online Curriculum Project Development Team



Linda Briggs, MSN, MA, RN
Project Lead and Content Expert

*Director, Program Development and Research
Respecting Choices®, A Division of C-TAC Innovations*

With 25 years of nursing experience as a critical care staff nurse, nurse manager, clinical nurse specialist, and educator, Linda Briggs joined Respecting Choices in 1999 to provide leadership in the development and dissemination of this internationally recognized program. She has been privileged to consult with healthcare leaders, organizations, and communities around the world providing education and support in implementing the principles of effective and sustainable person-centered decision-making programs. Her clinical and research interests have focused on the disease-specific planning needs of patients with advanced illness and their families.

Briggs has led the development of the Respecting Choices curriculum, co-authored several Respecting Choices manuals and programs, and has published numerous articles regarding advance care planning and end-of-life care. In 2015, Briggs received recognition from the Tribeca Disruptive Innovation Awards for the impact of the Respecting Choices program. In 2017, Briggs transitioned to the role of Director of Program Development and Research as Respecting Choices became a division of C-TAC Innovations.

Carole Montgomery MD, FHM, CPE, MHSA
Project Content Expert

*Director, Physician Development and Program Improvement
Respecting Choices®, A Division of C-TAC Innovations*

Before joining Respecting Choices, Doctor Carole Montgomery served as vice president of Clinical Integrated Pathways for Spectrum Health, a not-for-profit integrated health system based in western Michigan. She was responsible for designing and leading the development of population health management programs that focus on integrating care across settings and specialties, with a focus on success in both episode-based and population-based risk payment models. In addition to standardizing clinical best practice, objectives included driving reliable engagement of patients through standard education, shared decision making, and advanced care planning for all patients.



Montgomery has over 20 years of experience in the practice of hospital-based medicine and physician leadership in both physician group and hospital settings. During her practice in a large multi-specialty physician group, she served in a variety of leadership roles, including governance, administrative, and medical director functions.



Sandra Schellinger, MSN, RN, NP-C
Project Content Expert

Senior Faculty Consultant
Respecting Choices®, A Division of C-TAC Innovations

Prior to joining Respecting Choices, Sandra had over three decades of experience in a variety of administrative and clinical roles serving patients and families with serious illness in advance care planning, hospice and palliative care, and late-life research. Schellinger served in statewide advance care planning, palliative care, and end-of-life initiatives for the Twin Cities Medical Society, Minnesota Medical Association, and Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement. Sandra is an experienced researcher and is currently published in the areas of disease-specific advance care planning, whole person goals-of-care

discussions, and use of a lay healthcare professional as an alternative care approach for patients and families living with serious advanced illness.

Schellinger has been a First Steps® and Next Steps Advance Care Planning Faculty and Instructor for Respecting Choices since 2007 where she developed and implemented a system-wide advance care planning approach for Allina Health, Minneapolis, MN. Subsequently, as an independent faculty consultant with Respecting Choices she has assisted numerous health systems and Honoring Choices Minnesota partners to deliver a systematic approach of advance care planning. Sandra believes advance care planning is an ongoing process of delivering a person- and family-centered care by identifying and respecting an individual's beliefs, values, whole-person needs, and treatment preferences over the life span.

Joyce Hart Smerick, BS
Project Manager and Content Expert

Faculty Consultant
Respecting Choices®, A Division of C-TAC Innovations

Joyce Hart Smerick joined Respecting Choices as a Faculty Consultant in January 2017. Since September 2015, she had been serving as a Respecting Choices First Steps® Faculty independent contractor.

Smerick began work with Honoring Choices Wisconsin in 2012. As Organization Faculty, she trained and supported over 30 healthcare organizations across the state as they developed and expanded their advance care planning programs. She then became director of the Honoring Choices Wisconsin initiative.

Prior to joining the Society, Smerick worked in the field of continuing medical education at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health and Meriter Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin, and the University of Minnesota Medical School in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She has over 20 years of experience as a childbirth educator.

