



Exploring the End of Life Doula Role

Interest in the use of End-of-Life Doulas (EOLDs) is growing and hospices and palliative care programs, as well as clinicians in those organizations, are examining how they might incorporate EOLDs into end-of-life care or become an EOLD. Following is an explanation of the first steps in exploring EOLD concepts, practices, and programs, which are similar for both hospice organizations and clinicians. In all cases, begin with research and meeting EOLDs.

Research

An online search for articles, books and training and informational websites will reveal a plethora of helpful information to help a hospice organization in examining how they might use doulas or introduce doula concepts into services provided. Clinicians can begin to explore how they might incorporate doulas into their practice.

Meet EOLDs

EOLDs in your community can be located through a web search or through the online doula directories of several EOLD organizations. Administrators and clinicians can become acquainted with local doulas, come to better understand their services and role in end-of-life care, and make referrals to them. EOLDs are happy to explain to clinicians how they can collaborate with hospice care providers to further benefit families, possibly before the dying individual is receiving hospice care.

The next steps differ for organizations or clinicians, and for those who wish to become an EOLD,

Organizations

- Consider hiring an EOLD to educate the organization's staff, work with volunteer doulas or doulas in the community, and manage a hospice doula program as it evolves.
- Hire an EOLD organization to assist your hospice in developing an internal EOLD program. In addition to advising the hospice on incorporating EOLDs, the EOLD organization can assist with marketing, forms, scheduling vigils, and training.

Clinicians

- Become trained as an EOLD. Read the websites of various training organizations to see which appeal to you, and then contact them to discuss what they offer and how their program fits your needs and vision.
- Your journey may involve questions on how you manage your role as a clinician and a doula. This is a topic that trainers usually discuss in trainings.



Look for additional information sheets like this one, produced by the EOLD Advisory Council, about the EOLD role and how to utilize them in end-of-life care in many settings. You may access these informational one-page documents [here](#).

For more information about end of life doulas, please email: EOLDoula@nhpco.org