

CENTERING CHOICE IN CRITICAL CARE

Strategies For Promoting Self-Advocacy and Person-Centered Care during Critical Illness

TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2025
3:00 EDST

PRESENTERS



MAURICE BELLSTEWART

Maurice Bellstewart and Bettie Bell live in Newport News, Virginia. Maurice is a graduate of Heritage High School and Wilson Workforce Rehabilitation Center with a certificate in Food Services, Dishwasher Handling, and Food Safety Handling. He has been featured in national publications for his innovative work as an intern with CROP Foundation, a nonprofit focusing on hospitality, food sustainability, and restaurant innovation. Maurice is a strong self-advocate for himself and his community.



BETTIE BELL

Bettie Bell is Maurice's mother. She and Maurice have collaborated together to support his autonomy and independence throughout his life. She is proud of his skills in asking for what he wants and needs, and his willingness to creatively consider all options when planning for his future. Bettie is an endorsed PBS Facilitator, a BCBA and technology consultant who supports people with disabilities to live their best lives with the supports they need and the autonomy they deserve.



Self advocacy and person centered support are foundational strategies to improve quality of life in daily routines. At the onset and during treatment of a critical illness, it is particularly imperative to ensure that medical support teams provide opportunities for choice and self-advocacy during treatment. During diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of critical illness, effective medical care should prioritize person centered-support strategies and planning to enhance autonomy.

In October of 2024, Maurice, an autistic man with intellectual disabilities, was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer with rare autoimmune response complications. He developed innovative strategies to communicate his preferences and needs. During this webinar, Maurice and his mother will share his self-advocacy story and provide insight on how his medical support team collaborated to provide person centered support. Actionable health care support strategies and customizable visual supports and templates will be provided to webinar participants to encourage autonomy and choice in healthcare decisions.

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