

Exploring Do-Not-Resuscitate Orders

Before discussing do-not-resuscitate orders, the concept may need to be explained, as it may be unfamiliar to patients from some countries. In life-threatening situations, people from diverse cultural backgrounds may have differing perceptions/attitudes towards the following important concepts. See the Intensive care/Coronary care, Oncology/Palliative care, and Death and Dying sections of the *Guidelines to Practice* for further information.

- What is the patient's/family's attitude to resuscitation?
- What is the patient's/family's understanding/perception of life support?
- What is their definition of death?
- What is their religious background, and how active are they currently?
- What do they believe are the causal agents in illness, and how do these relate to the dying process?
- What is the patient's social support system?
- Who makes decisions about matters of importance in the family?

Adapted from Masi, 1989