

April 3, 2015

The Rev. Dr. Roy Medley  
Executive Secretary, The ABC in the USA  
P.O. Box 851  
Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851

Dear Roy,

First, I want to thank you for asking me to attend the C-TAC conference in D.C. in your stead. I will have to be honest, this is an organization with which I am not familiar. Further I assume you have some knowledge of the organization so will not spend time describing their work. Also I have enclosed a packet of information which was very helpful to me in getting my focus around their mission.

Second, let me make a general observation. In looking at the attendee roster and the presenters at the conference it is evident that although a wide spectrum of organizations involved in health care the heavy representation is acute care, academics/researchers, and national health care advocacy groups. Although Leading Age (AAHSA) is represented the nursing home providers are a minority.

As to the conference itself the focus of the presenters that spoke at the general sessions was two fold. First, they spent considerable time on the current state of affairs regarding progress or the lack thereof on advancing the issues around the transformation of advanced illness care. The consensus is that great strides have been made but there remain many barriers to reaching C-TAC's goals at various levels, legislative, community, and medical practice. Second, they focused on how delivery of advanced illness care has changed. Starting with the old model "the doctor is the final word" which initially swung to "the patient is totally in charge" to what is now being advocated, "it is a patient – doctor team effort focused on the needs, wants and moral convictions of both".

Another focus was pilot projects around the country that advance the goals of C-TAC. One of the presenters was the director of the Alameda County Care Alliance. This is fairly new pilot project which is a partnership between the churches of Alameda County, CA and a major health care company. It only began in November of 2014. Their goals are very similar to those of the Memphis project mentioned below for which there is a description enclosed.

Two of the speakers were actually testimonials given by two persons who are living with advanced forms of cancer. Both were a testimony to the importance of the partnership mentioned above and the value of striving to live well with your disease. Both remain actively engaged in their professions, family and community. They were also a testimony to the significance of broad based community support systems which included faith communities.