

Shared Decision Making

Shared decision making (SDM) is the conversation that happens between a patient and their health professional to reach a healthcare choice together. This conversation needs patients and professionals to understand what is important to the other person when choosing a treatment.

- Health professionals give patients information about all the treatment options for the health problem. Health professionals also give information about an option that is medically better for a person based on the patient's personal medical history and test results.
- Patients give professionals information their life and experiences of illness and treatment. Patients have views that one treatment option may fit better in their life than another. This view about treatment may be different from the medically best treatment.
- The shared decision making conversation needs both the patient and professional to understand the other's point of view and agree the reasons why the treatment chosen was the best one for the patient. The reason may be that it was the best medical option or it was the best option for that patient's life.

Decision Aids

Decision aids are information resources designed to help people make decisions about difficult healthcare choices. They have good quality information about all the options and the health problem, and questions to help you think about what is important to you. Going through a Decision Aid will help you make an informed decision about which option is best for you.

- **Step 1 (Introduction)** – describing the health problem, treatment options and decisions to be made. Further, background information is also provided about the condition itself.
- **Step 2 (Compare options)** – accurate information on the similarities and differences between treatment options.
- **Step 3 (My views)** – here you are asked for your personal likes and dislikes about the different treatments.
- **Step 4 (My Trade-offs)** – helping you to trade-off the advantages and disadvantages of each option.
- **Step 5 (My Decision)** – supporting you to choose an option that is best for you.

If you feel you need more support to talk through the treatment options and to make a decision, your doctor or health professional can support you through this process.

People who use decision aids say they understand the health problem and treatment choices more clearly, they understand why one treatment is better for them than another, and they can talk more confidently about their reasons for liking or not liking an option with doctors, nurses, friends and family.

Further information can be found at <http://sdm.rightcare.nhs.uk/about/about-the-nhs-shared-decision-making-programme/>