



Let's talk supported decision-making—real world scenario

Supporting Bill to choose his own aged care supports

Supported decision-making is about empowering the individual to make their own decisions, with support tailored to their needs. The role of the supporter is not to make decisions for someone with impaired capacity, but to assist them in understanding, considering, and expressing their choices.



About Bill

Bill, a 70-year-old man living in regional Queensland, receives aged care supports. He has early-stage dementia and a history of depression and anxiety. Bill loves building model aeroplanes, chatting with friends at the Men's Shed, and being outdoors when he can. His main goal is to stay as independent as possible in his own home. Bill's long-term support worker recently retired, and he needs to choose a new one. Bill wants to find someone who could help him stay active and support his interests. His daughter, Emma, wants to support him in making this decision while ensuring the choice is his.

Supported decision-making in action

Table 1: Supporting Bill to decide on healthcare matters

Steps	Example of support
1. Get to know the person	Emma chats with Bill about what makes him feel happy and what he values most. Bill said he enjoys working on model planes, visiting the Men's Shed, and being outdoors. She listens to what matters most to him: staying independent, having a routine, and having a friendly and active support worker.
2. Identify the decision	Emma and Bill discuss the decision he needs to make. She asks: 'Do you want to stay with your current provider and choose a new support worker, or would you like to look for a new provider?' After thinking it over, Bill decides he wants to explore other providers to find one that better suits his needs.



Steps	What to ask, think about and suggested questions
3. Prepare to make the decision	Emma and Bill review his care plans together to understand his current supports. She chooses a time when Bill feels calm and focused before starting the conversation.
4. Gather the right information	Together, they research providers that offer both social and in-home supports. They look at costs, flexibility, and experience with mental health. Emma also helps Bill find providers with workers who share Bill's hobbies.
5. Communicate clearly	Emma uses short notes, photos, and simple comparisons to explain the options. They take breaks to avoid overwhelming Bill with too much information and Emma encourages Bill to ask questions and share his thoughts.
6. Explore options together	They discuss the pros and cons of each provider. For example, one provider has a worker who enjoys building model planes, while another offer's help with transport to the to the Men's Shed. Bill thinks about what feels right for him and says he wants a worker who shares his interests. Bill decides he would like time to consider his options, so they agree to revisit the topic the next week.
7. Support and act on the decision	After thinking about it, Bill chooses the provider with the worker who enjoys model planes. Emma helps him contact the provider to ask questions and attends the first meeting with him for support.
8. Review and uphold the decision	After a few weeks, Emma checks in with Bill to see how he is feeling about his choice. He says he is happy with his new support worker and feels respected and understood. They agree to review the arrangement in a few months to ensure it continues to meet his needs.

Outcome

Bill's preferences and goals guided the decision. With Emma's support, he chose a provider that aligned with his interests and helped him stay independent. Bill feels respected and confident in his decision.



Contact us

T 1300 653 187

E publicguardian@publicguardian.qld.gov.au

www.publicguardian.qld.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the Public Guardian acknowledges and pays our respects to the Traditional Custodians over the lands, seas and waterways throughout the state of Queensland in which we work and live and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Translation

If you need translation services, contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450**.