



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

Supporting Evelyn to make living arrangements decisions

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 Evelyn

Evelyn, 79, lives in regional Queensland and English is her second language. She migrated from the Philippines and values her cultural traditions, community, and independence. Evelyn has early signs of dementia and mobility issues, and she is starting to worry that she is not coping at home. She doesn't want something bad to happen to her and feels unsure about what to do next. Evelyn's daughter, Maria wants to support her, in deciding whether to move into residential aged care or stay at home with additional support, while respecting Evelyn's language, culture and independence.

Supported decision-making in action

Table 1: Supporting Evelyn to decide on where and how to live

Steps	Example of support
1. Get to know the person	Maria talks with Evelyn about what matters most to her. Evelyn shares that she values her independence, enjoys cooking traditional Filipino meals, tending her garden and staying connected to her church community.
2. Identify the decision	Evelyn needs to decide whether to move into residential care or stay at home with more support services. Maria ensures Evelyn understands the decision and what it involves.



Steps	What to ask, think about and suggested questions
<p>3. Prepare to make the decision</p>	<p>Maria chooses the afternoon to talk with Evelyn when she feels most alert. She also arranges a bilingual community worker to join the conversation, so Evelyn can express herself in Tagalog if she prefers. Maria also researches average wait times for aged care and in-home supports, so she can help Evelyn understand and consider these factors when making her decision.</p>
<p>4. Gather the right information</p>	<p>Together, they collect information about aged care homes and support services. They focus on options that offer cultural meals, accessible gardens, and mobility support.</p>
<p>5. Communicate clearly</p>	<p>Maria uses photos and simple language to explain the options. She encourages Evelyn to ask questions in Tagalog with the interpreter's help, ensuring Evelyn fully understands the choices.</p>
<p>6. Explore options together</p>	<p>Evelyn and Maria visit a few facilities and discuss the pros and cons of each. Evelyn prefers one with a garden, chapel, and staff who speak her language. She feels it would allow her to stay connected to her culture and community. Evelyn asks her friend who is living in aged care about his experience.</p>
<p>7. Support and act on the decision</p>	<p>Evelyn decides to move into the facility she feels most comfortable in. Maria helps her with the move and brings meaningful items from home, including her rosary beads, recipe book, and plants, to make the new space feel familiar.</p>
<p>8. Review and uphold the decision</p>	<p>After a few weeks, Maria checks in with Evelyn to see how she is settling in. Evelyn shares that she feels happy and comfortable in her new home. She enjoys spending time in the garden and appreciates that the staff respect her culture and support her independence.</p>

Outcome

Evelyn's cultural background, language, and values were central to her decision. With Maria's support, Evelyn was able to make an informed choice that reflected her wishes and priorities. She now feels safe, connected, and independent in her new home.



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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.