



# Let's talk supported decision-making — healthcare decisions checklist

## Supporting someone with impaired decision-making abilities to choose a health provider, treatment or doctor

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 making ability, but to assist them in understanding, considering, and expressing their choices.

### Healthcare related decisions:

- What does the person already know about their conditions
- Has the doctor explained it in plain language or visuals?
- What does the person value most—comfort, independence, time with family?
- Are there any risks they would like to understand better?

## An 8-steps approach to supported decision-making

Table 1: Questions to ask when supporting someone to make healthcare decisions.

Steps	What to ask, think about and suggested questions	Notes/reflections
1. Get to know the person	<p><b>Ask and understand what matters most — comfort, staying active, time at home, or being with family.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you enjoy most in your daily life?</li> <li>• What is important to you when it comes to your health?</li> <li>• What makes you feel happy and comfortable?</li> </ul>	
2. Identify the decision	<p><b>Be clear about the treatment of care choice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think about your current treatment?</li> <li>• What do you want to do with your treatment?</li> </ul>	



Steps	What to ask, think about and suggested questions	Notes/reflections
<p><b>3. Prepare to make the decision</b></p>	<p><b>Choose a calm time, suggest the person put together a list of questions for the meeting or ask someone they trust to join the conversation. If they'd like a support person to join, ask if they would like the support person to take notes or ask questions during the meeting.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would you like someone you trust join us for this chat?</li> <li>• Is there a time or place where you feel most comfortable talking about this?</li> <li>• Would you like to put together some questions for the meeting?</li> <li>• Would you like your support person to ask any questions during the meeting or do you just want them to take notes or listen?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Gather the right information</b></p>	<p><b>To ensure the person understands, ask health staff to explain treatment options in plain language or with visuals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's ask the doctor or health professional to explain that again or have them write it down?</li> <li>• Do you have any questions you'd like to ask the doctor?</li> <li>• Do you want to list the pros and cons of each option?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. Communicate clearly</b></p>	<p><b>Use plain language, visuals to explain the decision.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Here's what each option means. Which one feels right to you ?</li> <li>• Would you like me to explain anything again ins a simpler way?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6. Explore options together</b></p>	<p><b>Help them think about their choices by asking how they feel about them and discussing the pros and cons of each.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you feel about the results of each option?</li> <li>• Which option do you prefer, with what's important to you?</li> <li>• This option helps pain but might need more appointments—how do you feel about that?</li> </ul>	



Steps	What to ask, think about and suggested questions	Notes/reflections
<p><b>7. Support and act on the decision</b></p>	<p><b>Help with the practical steps of organising care, transport or follow up.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would you like me to book your first appointment?</li> <li>• I can drive or organise transport for your appointment — what would you prefer?</li> <li>• Is there anything else I can do to make it easier for you?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>8. Review and uphold the decision</b></p>	<p><b>After a few weeks check in to see how they feel about their decision and adjust if needed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are you feeling about your decision?</li> <li>• Is it still working for you?</li> <li>• Would you like to talk about changing anything?</li> </ul>	

### Additional questions to ask

- What worries you most about this decision?
- What would a good outcome look like for you?
- Are there any personal or cultural beliefs you'd like us to think about?
- What kind of help do you think you'll need after making this decision?
- Do you prefer to get information by talking, reading, or looking at pictures?
- Do you feel like you have all the information you need to decide?
- Is there someone else you'd like to include in this decision?
- What are the most important things to you about your health and life?
- How do you feel about the risks and benefits of each option?
- What would help you feel more confident about your choice?
- What will happen if you don't decide or make decision now?



#### Contact us

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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**.