What is Shared Decision Making (SDM)?

"No decision about me, without me" is the fundamental principle underpinning many of the current changes in NHS healthcare. Health care professionals may fail to recognise how knowledgeable patients are, or to understand the beliefs of individuals and groups. By engaging in balanced discourse, clinicians not only help a person come to terms with their needs and the potential gains and losses from different treatment approaches, but also broaden their own understanding of what is important to people.

The principle of engaged patients being well informed and taking a central role in all decisions made in their care is neither new nor revolutionary, but some patients may be passive receivers of care and many medical professionals, inadvertently or otherwise, are paternalistic in their delivery. Sharing decision making with the patient, referenced to understandable evidence and timely support when selecting investigation and treatment options, benefits not only individuals but the system as a whole.

- Making shared decision making a reality

NHS England is now responsible for Shared Decision Making and their objective is to embed Shared Decision Making in NHS care. The NHS England Business Plan states that ‘We will give citizens the knowledge, skills and confidence to manage their own health by developing a coherent, linked package of shared-decision making aids so that people can actively participate with their clinicians in making choices about their care and treatment.’

Patient Decision Aids (PDAs)

Along a care pathway there are decision points where a simple choice is not possible and a number of treatment options need to be considered. Decision Aids are tools that provide clear and comprehensive guidelines on the condition and on the treatment options available for the clinician and patient to consider together.

Thirty Six Patient Decision Aids (PDAs) were launched during 2012/2013, designed to help patients understand and consider the pros and cons of possible treatment options and to encourage communication between them and their healthcare professionals. The PDAs feature evidence-based information, images, diagrams and animations.

Use of PDAs has been found to provide greater participation in decision-making, greater knowledge, more accurate risk perceptions, reduction in anxiety and results in fewer patients choosing major surgery. The PDAs available are:- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Repair, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening, Acne, Birth options after previous caesarean section, Bladder Cancer, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Cataracts, COPD, Depression, Diabetes: Additional Treatments to Improve Control, Diabetes: Improving Control, Diagnostic testing for Down’s Syndrome, End of Life: Place of care, Established Kidney Failure, Established Kidney Failure (Kidney Dialysis), Established Kidney Failure (Kidney Transplant), Gallstones, Glue Ear, Heavy Menstrual Bleeding (Menorrhagia), High Blood Pressure, High Cholesterol, Inguinal Hernia, Localised Prostate Cancer, Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms, Lung Cancer, MS, Obesity, Osteoarthritis of the Hip, Osteoarthritis of the Knee, Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Testing, Rectal cancer(without distant spread), Recurrent Sore Throat, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Smoking Cessation, Stable Angina, Stroke Prevention for Atrial Fibrillation or Atrial Flutter.

These PDAs can be accessed at: - http://sdm.rightcare.nhs.uk/pda

Mobile Apps have also been developed, so that this information can be accessible anywhere. To find details: - PDA apps for Android. These patient decision aids are also available on the iPhone, from the App Store and are free to download.

Shared Decision Making Sheets (SDMS)

These resources are designed to facilitate a conversation between people with different types of expertise about the reasons for choosing one treatment option rather than another. The shared decision making sheets are:

- Prompts for use in consultations by health professionals with their patients
- Aide-memoires for patients with instructions for accessing the corresponding web-based patient decision aid

The Shared decision making sheets are available for:- AAA Repair, AAA Screening, Acne, Birth options after previous

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caesarean section, Bladder Cancer, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Cataracts, COPD, Depression, Diabetes additional treatments to improve control, Diabetes improving control, Diagnostic testing for down's syndrome, End of Life, Established Kidney Failure, Established Kidney Failure Transplant, Gallstones, Glue Ear, Heavy Menstrual Bleeding(Menorrhagia), High Blood Pressure, High Cholesterol, Inguinal Hernia, Lower Urinary Tract symptoms, Lung Cancer, MS, Obesity, Osteoarthritis of the hip, Osteoarthritis of the knee, Prostate cancer, PSA Testing, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Recurrent sore throat, Smoking cessation, Stable Angina, Stroke prevention for atrial flutter and flutter, Rectal Cancer.

These SDMs are available at: - http://sdm.rightcare.nhs.uk/shared-decision-making-sheets/

Option Grids

Option Grids are designed to help compare reasonable treatment or screening options. This is achieved by using a grid, where the questions that patients frequently ask are in the rows and the answers relevant to each option are in the columns. The Grids are brief, easy to read and based on scientific evidence. Each Grid comes with an evidence document. They are typically used during the consultation, to help patients and health professionals talk about difficult healthcare decisions. The option grids available are:- Angina, Atrial fibrillation, Breast cancer surgery, Breast reconstruction, Carpal tunnel syndrome, Chronic kidney disease, Crohn's disease, Dupuytren’s disease, Employment and mental health, Epilepsy surgery, Epilepsy treatments when considering pregnancy, Fluid in middle ear, Heavy menstrual bleeding, HIV test, Implantable cardioverter defibrillator, Insulin treatment, Language options for deaf infants/children, Lung cancer screening, Localised prostate cancer - low risk, Newborn circumcision, Osteoarthritis of the Hip, Osteoarthritis of the knee, Knee pain due to arthrosis, Ovarian Cancer Risk – Before, Ovarian Cancer Risk - After, Prostate specific antigen (PSA) test, Psoriasis, Sciatica - slipped (herniated) disc, Sore throat, Spinal stenosis, Testing for Down’s syndrome in pregnancy - Amniocentesis, Testing for Down’s syndrome in pregnancy – Downs syndrome screening, Tonsillitis, Trigger finger.

These Option Grids are available at: - http://www.optiongrid.org/optiongrids.php

Ask 3 Questions?

The ‘Ask 3 Questions’ approach was adopted as a key tool for engaging the public and supporting a culture change so patients routinely expect to be involved in decisions about their care. It was originally developed by The Health Foundation in collaboration with Cardiff and Newcastle Universities and was seen as a positive, simple and widely applicable tool. Supporting materials are available including a leaflet and poster that are designed to be displayed in patient waiting areas.

The Ask 3 questions leaflet and poster :- Ask 3 Questions leaflet , Ask 3 Questions Poster

The Aqua website is: - http://www.advancingqualityalliance.nhs.uk/sdm/

What education is available?

An e-learning resource provides guidance on what Shared Decision Making is and how to implement it in practice. It also provides resources to help health professionals learn the required skills. The e-learning sessions include films to illustrate examples of good and bad consultations and prompts, along with resources to aid health professionals with their work. The Shared Decision Making e-learning package is suitable for all healthcare professionals, health improvement personnel and patient engagement representatives to inform and educate them on Shared Decision Making in order to embed it in day to day clinical practice. For further details:- Shared Decision Making online e-learning resource

This online resource can be accessed at: - http://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/shared-decision-making/

What other resources are available?

- The Thames Valley Knowledge Team runs a community of Interest for Shared Decision Making. If you wish to join the Community of Interest, you can register by contacting: - knowledge@tvhie.org.uk. For further information about Shared Decision Making resources and details about the Thames Valley Knowledge Team SDM programme of work:- Thames Valley Knowledge Team SDM Programme
- The Health Foundation is an independent charity working to improve the quality of healthcare in the UK. It has an established programme of work on shared decision making and has produced both influential documents and a well-recognised training programme- MAGIC (making good decisions in collaboration):- Health Foundation SDM Programme
- For details of the NHS England Shared Decision Making programme:- NHS England SDM Programme
- For information about the AQuA SDM programme including case studies illustrating the successes and challenges experienced by those implementing SDM and Self-Management Support in practice:- AQuA SDM Programme
- For patient stories and experiences of shared decision making:- Healthtalkonline

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