

# Shared Decision-Making in Practice

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Companion reflection guide for the Open University Shared Decision-Making Animation

# Purpose of the Reflection Guide

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The guide supports health and social care professionals in critically reflecting on shared decision-making in their clinical practice.



After watching the 4-minute shared decision-making animation, use this guide to reflect on your own practice individually or as a team.

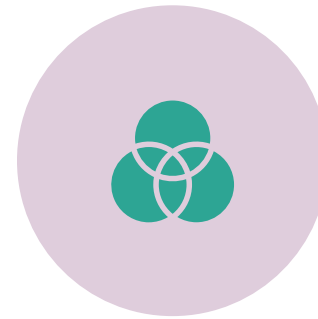
# What is shared decision-making (SDM)?



SDM is a collaborative conversation where:



Health and social care professionals and patients discuss choices together,



compare options,



and agree on a plan that reflects both evidence and what matters most to the patient.

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# Reflection prompt

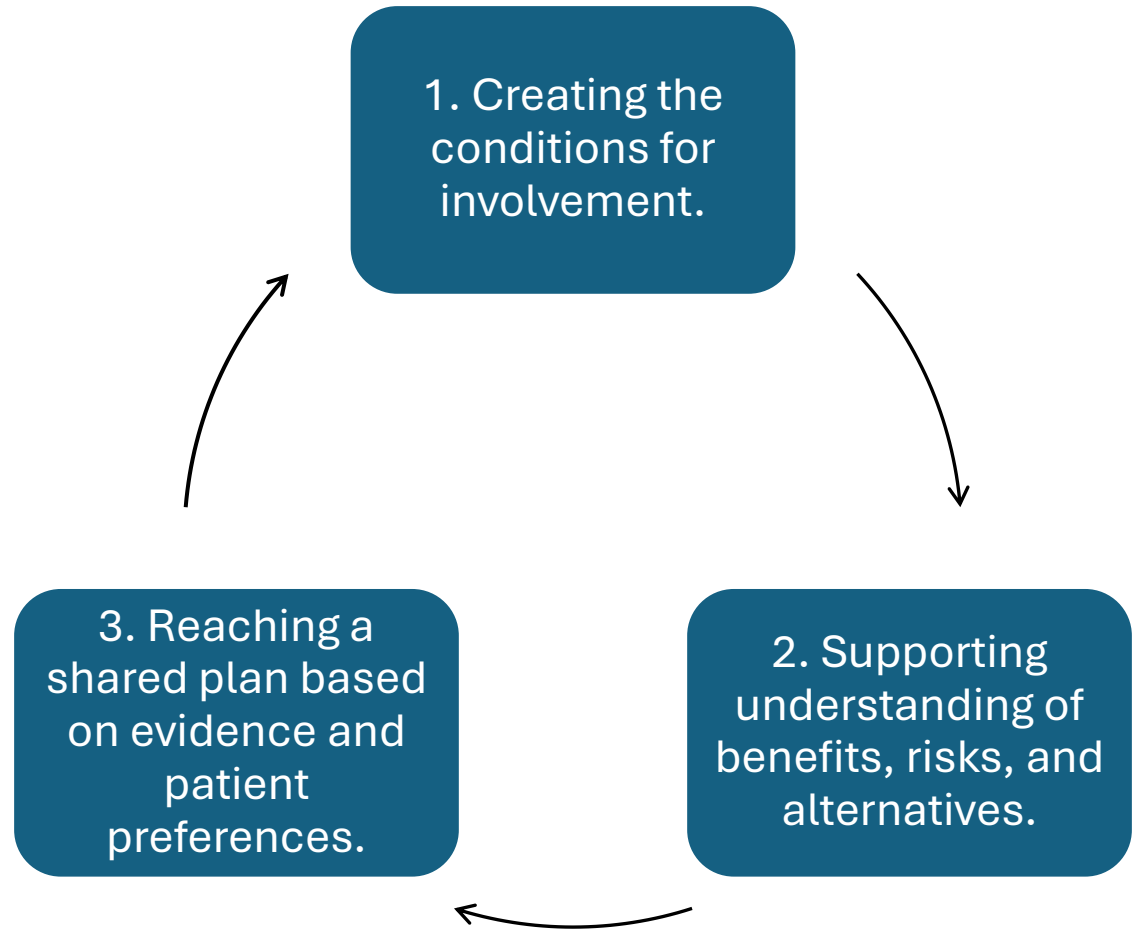
How confident are we that SDM is happening consistently in our everyday practice?



# What does SDM look like in practice?

## Three steps of Shared Decision-Making

1. Conversations about choices
2. Comparing options
3. Deciding together



# Step 1. Conversations about choices

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## **Establish Choice Awareness**

Make it clear that a choice exists.

## **Tailor Communication**

Check patient preference for amount and type of information they wish to receive.

## **Encourage Participation**

Recognise power dynamics and actively invite patient involvement to build partnership.



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# Reflection prompt

1. Do patients know there is a choice?
2. Do we actively invite their views?
3. Is the environment supportive?  
(time, privacy, communication needs, family involvement)
4. What barriers get in the way and how can we change these?



# Step 2. Comparing options

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## **Present Balanced Options**

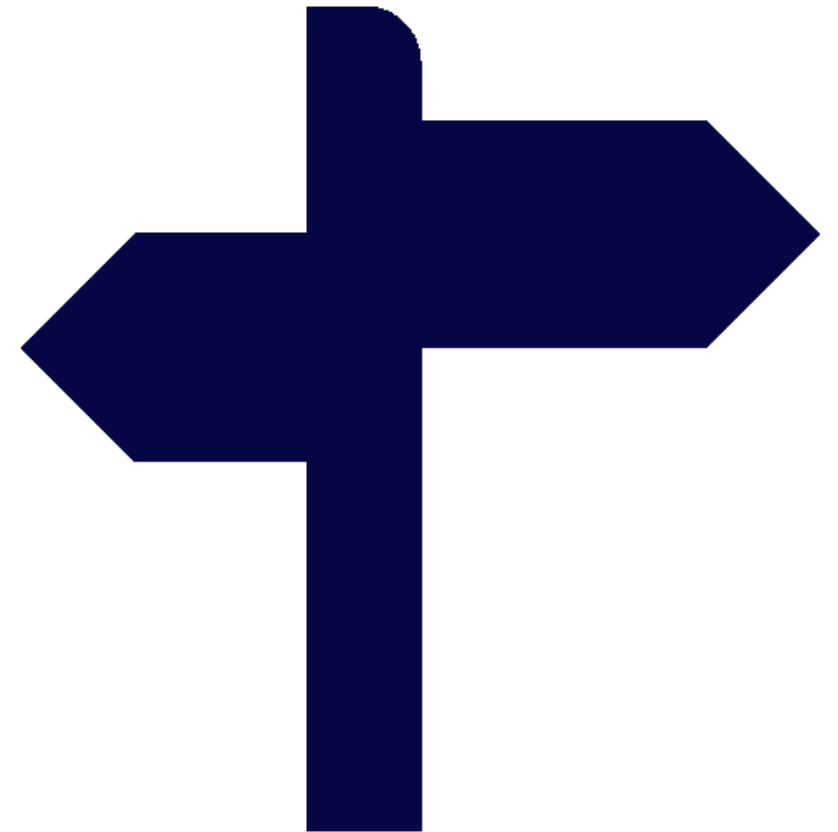
Provide evidence-based information on benefits, risks, and consequences of various treatments including no treatment option.

## **Use Decision Support Tools**

Decision support tools like patient decision aids help patients visualise and compare options.

## **Ensure Patient Understanding**

Ask patients to explain treatment options and expectations in their own words to identify and correct any misunderstandings.



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# Reflection prompt

1. Do we explain benefits, risks, alternatives, and the option of no treatment?
2. Do we avoid medical jargon?
3. How do we know that patients understand what we tell them?
4. Do we ask patients what they hope treatment will do for them?
5. Do we/can we provide patient decision aids?



# Step 3. Deciding together

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## **Allow Reflection Time**

Patients may need time to reflect or consult family before making a decision about treatment.

## **Patient Concerns**

Encourage patients to express worries and personal circumstances to create better, personalised conversations about decisions.

## **Clear Care Planning**

Agree on next steps and care plans to help patients feel supported and confident in the decision.



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# Reflection prompt

1. How often do we ask what matters most to the patient?
2. Do we actively invite patients to share their worries, and concerns?
3. How much time do we give patients to think about their decision? How do we know if this is enough?
4. How do we check patient understanding?



# Action Planning



## Reflection

- Which step feels strongest in our service?
- Which is most challenging?

### Individually

What is one thing you could change in your next consultation?

### As a team

What strengths should we build on?

What is one realistic improvement we could test?

