

Top tips for Implementing Patient Decision Aids (PDAs)



Engage the Whole Team

Bring together clinical, administrative, and service management staff involved in the pathway. Set up a small working group to plan how the patient decision aid (PDA) will be implemented. Engage communications teams where patient information needs review. Identify practical and financial considerations, such as printing and distribution.



Choose the Right Patient Decision Aid (PDA)

Select a PDA that fits the decision and patient population. Review the content of the PDA. Check the options and risks/benefits are accurate and based on current evidence. Offer different formats where possible (e.g. digital, print, languages).



Build it into the Pathway

Map the patient pathway and introduce the PDA around the treatment discussion to support shared decision-making conversations.



Think About Delivery

Use a range of delivery methods such as letters, QR codes, email, or in-person approaches.



Decide How the PDA is Used

Consider whether the PDA should be used at home and/or integrated into the consultation to personalise the discussion.



Encourage Patient Use

Ask patients to use the PDA. Patients are more likely to engage with a PDA when a health professional recommends and explains what it is and how it can help them.



Allow Time and Support

Give patients enough time to review the PDA and provide a contact for questions or follow-up support.