

FOUR STEPS OF SHARED DECISION MAKING

(Stiggelbout, 2015)

STEP WITH FEATURES

1. CHOICE, PROCESS AND DIVISION OF ROLES

Essence: there is a choice to be made, and the patient has a role in making this.

- Present the available options impartially (also: wait-and-see/doing nothing).
- People often expect you to tell them what needs to be done.
- Leaving the decision with the patient may result in fear. Point out that decision-making is a joint process.
- Many patients are keen to start treatment as soon as possible.
- Explain that, medically speaking, there is time to consider options.
- Outline the different phases of the decision-making process.

2. MEDICAL TECHNICAL OPTIONS

Essence: the patient understands the disease and knows the advantages and disadvantages of the treatment options.

- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of all the options impartially.
- Use numbers (so many in 100 people).
- Convert the side effects and the short and long term consequences of treatment into effects on daily life.
- Information can be overwhelming. Check what has stuck (teach back method).
- Gauge first preference.

MODEL SENTENCES

- There are several treatment options; together, we are going to choose one that fits you best.
 - Sometimes a particular treatment may be suitable for another patient, but not for you.
 - Together, we will identify which treatment works best for you.
 - Choosing a treatment can be hard; I will help you.
 - There are no right or wrong choices. The main thing is that you're happy with the choice we make.
 - I'll give you all the information available on your disease and the possible treatments. Next, I'd like to hear what's important to you.
 - It's best to take some time to think about this. You have time to do this. We'll make a choice together next time we speak.
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- I'll explain what disease you have.
 - We'll talk about the treatment options together.
 - For each treatment, I'll explain the pros and cons, and when and how often these occur.
 - Let me know if you have any questions or if there's anything you don't understand.
 - Persistent tiredness is a frequent side effect. This means you won't be able to do as much during the day.
 - I'd like to check that I've explained things well enough. In your own words, could you please tell me what you've just heard?
 - We won't choose a treatment right now. I'd like to know, though, what you might be thinking of choosing.

3. PREFERENCES

Essence: explore quality of life (personal situation, what's important to the patient) and link results to the medical options.

- What's important for patients now and in the future plays a role when choosing a treatment. Many patients don't realise this. Therefore, ask pertinent questions about what matters to them.
- Summarise your understanding of what's important in the patient's life.
- Together, carefully consider the medical options in relation to the above.

- Each treatment will have consequences for your life, now and in the future. The best choice depends on what's important to you. That's what I'd like to talk about with you.
 - o Could you please tell me what you do each day?
 - o What things are important to you in your life? What's the most important thing?
 - o What are you most worried about?
 - o What do you enjoy doing? What makes you happy?
 - o What wishes do you have for the future?
 - o What are you hoping for?
- Now, we're going to think together, out loud, about what the best option for you might be.
 - o What are your instincts telling you?
 - o What feels like the most unpleasant thing?
 - o Which advantages do you think are the most important? And which disadvantages? Why?

4. DECISION

Essence: integrating medical options and quality of life in accordance with patient's preferences leads to a decision (or deferment).

- Aligning: who makes the decision?
- Link the decision and the preferences voiced by the patient and check if they match.
- The patient is able to revisit their decision if they wish.
- Support patients, even if they don't choose the best option from a medical standpoint.

- Whatever your choice is, I'll support you.
- Shall we choose now, or would you like to do this another time?
- Have you already made a choice yourself?
- Would you prefer me to suggest a treatment?
- Which treatment would suit you best? Why would you prefer this treatment?
- I think that you are choosing treatment X, because... Have I understood this correctly?
- We can always talk about your choice another time.