

Shared decision making (SDM) approach in your everyday patient care



What is shared decision making?

Shared decision making (SDM) is a collaborative process where **both the patient and clinician** contribute to medical decisions, sharing information and building consensus about the preferred treatment, agreeing on a care plan that aligns with the patient's values, goals, and preferences.



What are the key elements of SDM?

- **Mutual participation:** Both clinician and patient are actively involved.
- **Information sharing:** Clinicians provide evidence-based options, risks, and benefits; patients share their values and preferences.
- **Consensus building:** The goal is to reach a mutual agreement, though it is acceptable to “agree to disagree” in some cases.
- **Patient-centered:** Decisions reflect the patient's unique circumstances, cultural background, and personal beliefs.
- **Informed consent:** SDM goes beyond informed consent by ensuring patients understand their options and make choices based on what matters most to them.



Why it matters:

- Enhances **patient autonomy** and **engagement**.
- Improves **trust** and **communication** between patients and providers.
- **Enhanced patient satisfaction** because patients feel heard, respected, and more confident in their medical treatment.
- **Improve health outcomes** due to patient decreased anxiety about their treatment.
- **Quicker recovery time** due to patient empowerment often increases adherence to treatment.
- **Improve compliance** due to the patient's chosen treatment alignment with their values.
- **Increased treatment adherence** due to the patient's clear understanding of their options and chosen treatment based on their preferences.
- **Reduced use of unnecessary interventions** due to the use of SDM often results in patients choosing less invasive or more conservative treatments which can reduce exposure to unnecessary procedures and medications.



Simple steps you can take to implement SDM in your clinical practice

- **Invite the patient to participate**
 - Let patients know they have choices and their input is valued.
 - Use inclusive language like: “Let’s work together to find the best option for you.”
- **Present options clearly**
 - Explain all available treatments or interventions.
 - Discuss benefits, risks, and uncertainties using **plain language**.
 - Use **decision aids** (e.g., videos, brochures, risk calculators) to support understanding.
- **Explore patient values and preferences**
 - Ask about what matters most to the patient (e.g., lifestyle, goals, barriers, concerns).
 - Encourage open dialogue to understand their priorities.
- **Reach a shared decision**
 - Collaboratively choose the option that best aligns with the patient’s values.
 - Acknowledge that decisions may evolve and allow time for reflection.
- **Evaluate and follow up**
 - Check in on how the decision is working out.
 - Address barriers, adjust plans, and provide ongoing support.
- **Other organizational strategies to take into consideration**
 - **Leadership buy-in:** Secure support from administrators to foster a culture of SDM.
 - **Team-based approach:** Involve nurses, health coaches, and educators.
 - **Training and coaching:** Provide ongoing education for staff on SDM techniques.



For example:

Teach-Back Technique Training.

Scan QR code for more information.



The use of **SHARE** approach as a conversation starter

S = Seek your patient’s participation

H = Help your patient explore and compare treatment options

A = Assess your patient’s values and preferences

R = Reach a decision with your patient

E = Evaluate your patient’s decision

Scan the QR code for more information about the **SHARE** approach:



- Start small: Pilot SDM in one department or condition before scaling.
- Use technology: Integrate decision aids into EHRs and patient portals.

Additional resources QR codes:

