



*Promote a  
person's  
involvement in  
health decisions*

## Engaging health consumers through Shared Decision Making (SDM)

Consumer engagement empowers people to share in decision-making when it comes to their own health and the health of their families. Healthier Washington focuses on improving health care quality by providing opportunities for health care providers to learn skills and access high quality tools to more actively engage patients and their families in the decision making process.

Shared Decision Making is a collaborative process that allows patients and their providers to make health care decisions together, taking into account the best scientific evidence available, as well as the patient's values and preferences.

Shared Decision Making honors both the provider's expert knowledge and the patient's right to be fully informed of all care options and the potential harms and benefits. This process provides patients with the support they need to make the best individualized care decisions, while allowing providers to feel confident in the care they prescribe.

Patient decision aids are tools that can help people engage in shared health decisions with their health care provider. Research shows that use of patient decision aids leads to increased knowledge, more accurate risk perception, and fewer patients remaining passive or undecided about their care.<sup>1</sup> For example, a patient decision aid could help a pregnant woman who previously had a cesarean section to determine if she is a good candidate for a vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC).

With a grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, staff at HCA have been working with key state and national stakeholders to develop a process to certify high quality patient decision aids (PDAs) for use by health providers and their patients in Washington State. Implementing the use of certified decision aids, as well as providing training to support the spread of shared decision making, is supported through a State Innovation Models (SIM) grant from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI).

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<sup>1</sup> Greene J. and Hibbard, Judith H., "Why does Patient Activation Matter? An Examination of the Relationships between Patient Activation and Health-related Outcomes." *Journal of General Internal Medicine*. 2012;27(5):520-6.

## Washington is a first mover in Shared Decision Making

Shared Decision Making is just one of many innovative areas in health care that Washington State is taking a lead on. In 2007 Washington became the first state to pass legislation around shared decision making when the Blue Ribbon Commission bill ([Chapter 259](#)) enacted a shared-decision making pilot. The legislation also provided that if a provider uses a “certified decision aid” as part of the informed consent process that there is a presumption that informed consent has been given and obtained.

In 2012, state legislation granted the Health Care Authority’s chief medical officer the authority to certify patient decision aids. The certification criteria are guided by the work of the International Patient Decision Aid Standards (IPDAS) Collaborative, addressing the domains of content, development process and effectiveness.

Certification plays a significant role in assuring the quality of decision aids used by consumers, providers and payers. Washington State’s leadership in creating the decision aid certification process provides a model that other states and organizations can adopt.

## Spreading Shared Decision Making through Healthier Washington

Beginning in 2016 Healthier Washington is engaging the health care community to spread shared decision making through the following Healthier Washington investment areas:

- **Accountable Care Programs:** Two ACPs are integrating shared decision making strategies into their practices and the use of certified decision aids at pilot sites, beginning in 2016 with patient decision aids that focus on maternity health, followed by spine care/joint replacement, and cardiac/end of life care.
- **Practice Transformation Support Hub:** Through the Hub, providers will have the opportunity to participate in training to learn shared decision making skills, and receive technical assistance for implementation of shared decision making with the use of certified patient decision aids.

For additional information about Healthier Washington: [www.hca.wa.gov/hw](http://www.hca.wa.gov/hw).