



Office of Developmental Primary Care

Improving outcomes for people with developmental disabilities

Video Script: Supported Health Care Decision-Making for Self-Advocates

As a person with a disability, you probably face a variety of challenges when accessing health care. These challenges can include architectural barriers. Cluttered medical offices may make it difficult for you to move around. Inaccessible exam tables, scales, and other equipment may be hard to use. These access barriers can sometimes decrease the quality of your health.

You may face other challenges as well. Your doctor may feel pressed for time or lack experience when doing your examination. They may not understand how you best communicate.

Anyone can face obstacles during medical appointments or when making important decisions about their health. When it comes to your own healthcare, you might receive support from your family, friends, or people who work with you in the community.

Right now, there are several ways to get help when making decisions about your health.

A Power of Attorney allows someone to make decisions if you are unable to make your wishes known.

A conservator or guardian has a legal responsibility to make certain decisions on your behalf, even though you may not always agree with the decisions they make.

Supported Decision-Making is a philosophy that helps people with disabilities get support while maintaining control over their lives. Support comes in many different forms. The trusted supporters that you choose can help you understand your treatment options, communicate with a doctor, or learn about a new medication. Supporters can also provide you with physical assistance during an examination.

Your supporters can learn more about your medical history and personal preferences by helping you fill out a Health Passport. You can also ask your supporter to help you write down concerns and questions for your doctor.

Supported Health Care Decision Making-Agreements are a new concept. In the future, these signed forms will allow you to name one or several trusted supporters. They can help you understand your options, but you still have the right to make decisions about a treatment plan that works for you.

These agreements are completely optional. They can help doctors and other health care

workers understand the role of your supporters. If you no longer want someone's support, you can change or cancel each agreement at any time, for any reason.

For a video explaining Supported Health Care Decision-Making, please visit: [SDM Video for Self-Advocates](#)

For more information on the [Model Legislation](#) and a [Questions and Answers Resource](#), please visit: <http://autisticadvocacy.org/2014/07/asan-unveils-toolkit-for-advocates-on-health-care-and-the-transition-to-adulthood/>

Video Credits

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