

Title: Supporting patients in decision- making

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Introduction:

Shared decision- making is when patients are involved in decisions about their health care. This moves away from the traditional way of doctors interacting with patients, where the doctor told the patient what to do, and they followed. Evidence indicates very strongly that when patients are more involved, they get better more quickly and are generally happier. Shared decision- making is about health providers (including nurses and pharmacists) and patients working together as a team to achieve the best outcome. This approach is important because of the kind of illnesses and diseases many people suffer from today. According to WHO, chronic illnesses are on the rise and thought to increase even further in the next decade. Often for these kind of conditions, there are multiple treatment options. All of the options have their own kind of risks, benefits and harms that are different to each other. Depending on the individual, and what is important to them, the right treatment option differs. In other words, there is no one right treatment option to suit everyone. Two people with the same health problem may choose different treatment options because their wants are different. It is very important that patients are involved in making decisions about their health because they are the ones who will be living with the decision. This new approach is difficult for both health professionals and patients; however, the outcomes are very positive and is something that we need to try to achieve.

Aim:

The aim of this research was to find out what sort of information would be useful for patients to help them become more involved in decisions about their care. Pegasus Education material produced for Canterbury Health professionals were looked at to test whether it was suitable to help aid patients in their decision making.

Method:

A review of literature on patient decision- making was carried out.

Health professionals and patients were interviewed at practices.

Pegasus educational material was reviewed.

Decision aid was developed.

Decision aid was tested by health professionals and patients at practices.

Results:

Shared decision- making is a new idea with many challenges that come from health providers, patients and the medical system. It was used in Canterbury by some health providers, and not by others. However, a decision aid would make this process easier by providing direction. This research focused on option grids, just one of many different tools

can be used. Pegasus Education material could be changed with some additional research to meet patients' needs and form the content for option grids.

Conclusion:

The results of this study showed that there is still a long way to go in making shared decision-making everyday practice. This information helped to find the challenges to shared decision-making, and how to solve them. This project helped to form a relationship between Cardiff University and Pegasus Health to work together to make an option grid in cardiovascular health.