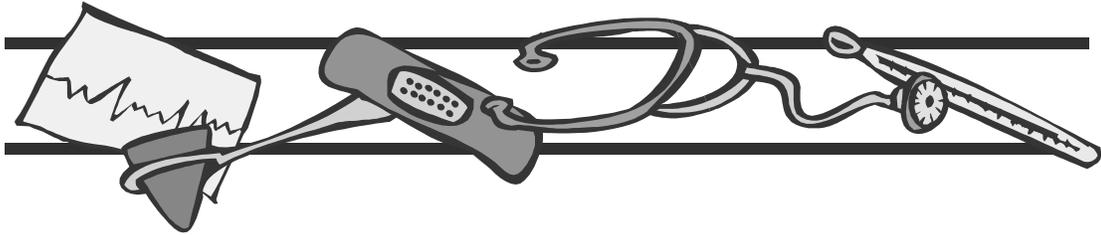


My Health-My Decision



A class to help people, who can make decisions, be more involved in their health care decisions

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

March 2005

Turn to page 2 in your books.

We are doing this training to make sure that you know that you have the power to help make your own health care decisions, now, and in the future. It is your health and your decision.

Health care is personal, but you may feel you do not always have a say in what it takes to keep you healthy.

You have the power and the right to make choices about everything that affects you. You must also balance what is good for you with what you may not like.

For example, you may not like salad or vegetables but you eat them because you know that they are good for you. You may not like going to the dentist but you know that you should because you want healthy teeth. All adults make these decisions.

Turn to page 3

People who care about you can help to make decisions easier. But you have control over the details and the final say in all of your health care decisions.

So let's talk about how you can better control your health care decisions now, and how you can think about planning ahead for times when you may be really sick and need more help.

Turn to page 4

We want to teach you 4 things today:

1. How to make decisions.
2. How to have more power over your health care decisions.
3. How to pick people you trust to help.
4. How to plan way ahead.

Turn to page 5

You make lots of decisions every day.

- 👍 What time do I get up?
- 👍 What do I have for breakfast?
- 👍 What do I wear today?
- 👍 What do I watch on TV?



You should also be making decisions about your health.

- 👍 When should I go to my doctor?
- 👍 Should I exercise today?
- 👍 How often should I brush my teeth?
- 👍 When should I take my medicine?
- 👍 Who can take me to my doctor?

If you are not making these choices, talk about it with someone you trust, or at your next planning meeting.



Turn to page 6

The most important thing is that you are the one to make the decisions. *There should be no surprises for you about your health care!*

Staff should not be making decisions without you. Your family should not be making decisions without you. In some cases you may want or need their help, but we will talk more about this later.

If people are making decisions without you, talk to someone you trust, like your Resource Coordinator, or people at your next planning meeting.



Now, with all decisions there are always choices to make. Let's look at an example of a health care decision to find out what the choices are.

Turn to page 7

Say you must decide if you will go to the dentist every 6 months or not. To figure out what the choices are, you need to ask some questions:

- Should I go to the dentist every 6 months?...Yes or No?
- What can happen if I do not go to the dentist every 6 months?
- What may happen if I do go to the dentist?
- What other information do I need?

Turn to page 8

- Who can help me if I am scared, if I need someone to talk to or to go with me?
- Can I just wait?

When you need to make an important decision, you can use the map on the next page to help you.

Turn to page 9 and let's fill it out together.

We are using the example of going to the dentist because it is something every one of us has to think about.

Say the decision is “YES, I will go”

...tell me some things that may happen if you go to the dentist every 6 months.



What if the decision is “NO, I will not go”

...tell me some things that may happen if you do not go to the dentist every 6 months.



Who can help you make this decision?



What else might help you decide?



How about medicine to help me relax?



How about talking to the dentist ahead of time...do you think that might help?



Waiting can be good. You may feel more in control, or have time to get more information, but waiting too long can cause other problems.

If you decide to wait a while, what could happen?



Turn to page 11

You can see that every decision means a lot of things to think about and questions to ask.

Remember, there are choices with every decision. Ask lots of questions to find out what those choices are so you can make the best decision for you.

People can help you, but the final decision is yours.

Turn to page 12

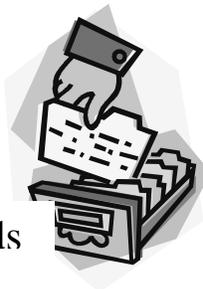
Now let's talk about having power over your health care decisions.

You are an adult and responsible for yourself. Just because you may need help to make some decisions does not mean that you have less rights than other people. You have a say in every part of your health care.

So what needs to happen to make sure that you are in charge?

Turn to page 13

Read from cards



You have the right to ask for all of those things. If anything on this list is not happening for you, talk to your staff, your family, or your doctor about it so you can get help.

It's important to get help when you need it. Let's talk about that now.

Turn to page 14

We all need help from time to time. Asking other people for help is good so we can think of things from a different point of view. Plus it is nice to know that people care about us.

Think about the people you know and trust the most. Some people you trust with your secrets, others you may trust to help you.

There are even people you may trust to make decisions for you.

Turn to page 15

Not everyone can make healthcare decisions for you. Paid staff usually can not make those decisions. A friend who may not understand the decision can't help you.

For healthcare decisions, it is best to choose a family member, or someone who can help you to understand all the questions to ask.



Let's give out the note paper now.



On that paper, write the name of the person who you think could help you make good healthcare decisions.



Everyone done? Let's get the papers from you now.



Now, let's figure out where people fit on the chart.



Okay, turn to page 16, and write the name of that person on the line in the middle of the heart.

Share your booklet with this person so they know that you picked them, and you can start talking about how they can help you with health care choices.

Turn to page 17

Some healthcare decisions may be too hard for you to make, or you may be too sick to make them. You can ask someone else to make these decisions for you. They would become your “health care agent”.

You can have this person just make one decision for you (like whether or not to have a surgery)... or you can have them make a lot of decisions for you (like all the choices that come with a certain treatment). It is your choice.

Choosing a health care agent is your right, so think about who it could be, and talk about it at your planning meeting. It may be the person that you just wrote down on the last page. Make sure that their name gets written in your file.

That person might be able to help you plan ahead. Turn to page 18 and let’s talk about this a little more.

Planning way ahead is hard for a lot of people. We may not want to think about getting really sick or going into a hospital.

This can be hard to think about so we understand if you do not want to talk. It's okay to just sit and listen.

It may be hard, but it is important to plan ahead. We do not want people to guess about what we want.

So talk with the people who care about you, and get things written down. That way people will know what you want if a time comes when you can not tell them because you are too sick.



Turn to page 19

These are some of the questions we want you to think about:

- Who would you like to make medical decisions for you if you are too sick to do it yourself?
- Is there a hospital that you prefer?
- Who do you want called if you have to go to the hospital?



- Do you want people visiting you if you are real sick?



Turn to page 20

- Are there things you would want with you in the hospital? Like a special pillow or warm socks?
- Would you want extra medicine so you do not feel pain, even if it makes you sleep more?
- Would you want to be on a life support machine if there was no hope of you waking up again?
- Would you want people to pray for you?
- What do you think about a nursing home?



Turn to page 21

Have you ever thought about being so sick that you may not get better? It is scary to think about. But even in this situation, you still want to be involved in the decisions, or decide who will be helping you.



Have you ever thought about dying?

Do you know if you want to be buried or cremated?
Is there a place that you would want to be buried or a special place for your ashes?

Turn to page 22

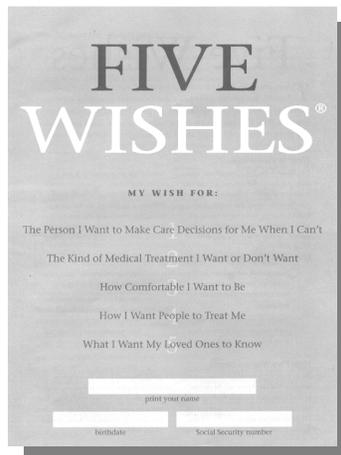
Have you ever thought about what kind of memorial service that you would want? Maybe there is special music or favorite sayings.

These are important things to think about and talk about with others. That way people won't have to guess about what is important to you and get it wrong. Share these questions with people who know and care about you.

Turn to page 23

You can get help to fill out a legal paper to make sure that your choices are carried out. One type is called the “**Five Wishes**” booklet.

Five Wishes asks a lot of the same questions that we talked about, so it should be easy to fill out after this training. Ask your Coordinator for a copy.



Turn to page 24

Do you have any questions before we end?



Thank you very much for coming today.

Ardmore wants to make sure that they are doing a good job in helping you to make the best decisions about your health..

Please share this information and booklet with the people who support and care about you. Also talk about this at your planning meeting.

Our hope is that you live a happy, healthy life surrounded by people who know you and care about you.