Support for Decision Making consultation submission

**Name:** Mental Health Coordinating Council (NSW)

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# How can we help people with disability make decisions for themselves?

* Resources: Yes
* Information: Yes
* Decision Guides: Yes
* Having a person help: Yes
* Other: Yes

Ensure an understanding of the principles and values that underpin the SDM best practice approach (ALRC), that also aligns with the UNCRPD, including: empowerment; self-determination; acknowledging lived experience; respect; human rights based, strength-based, flexible. Also see http://www.adacas.org.au/media/1085/supported-decision-making-psychosocial-disability-and-the-ndis.pdf

# Who are the best people to help you (or a person with a disability) to make decisions?

* Family: Yes
* Friends: Yes
* Peer Support Networks: Yes
* Mentors: Yes
* Coordinators: Yes
* LAC: Yes
* NDIA Partners: Yes
* Advocates: Yes
* Service Providers: Yes
* Other: Yes

Recovery Coaches

# What should they do to help with decision-making?

Demonstrate that the support they provide is transparent; promoting choice and control; understand dignity of risk; understand recovery practice as unique and self-driven; adopt collaborative and relation-based practice; be reflective; be willing to develop their skills and knowledge in an ongoing way.

# How can they get better at helping?

* Getting to know the participant well: Yes
* Doing some training on decision support: Yes
* By having resources and information about providing decision support: Yes
* Other: Yes

Adopt a process that involves good preparation, effective communication and a decision-making process to keep things on track: 1.Identify the decision; 2. Involve other people in the process; 3. Gather information; 4. Identify a range of options; 5. Consider the consequences and prioritise actions; 6. Make a decision and action it; 7. Reflect and review the decision made.

# How can we make sure the right people are helping?

* They are chosen by the NDIS Participant as a decision supporter: Yes
* They value the rights of people to make decisions with support: Yes
* They are a registered provider: Yes
* They enable the participant to take risks: Yes
* Other: Yes

Ensure that the person wants a particular individual involved; that the person feels safe with that person involved; that the other person doesnt have a conflict of interest; and if the decision affects another person and that their views are considered; does the person have the particular expertise that could help inform the person to make their decision

# What should decision supporters know about so they can better help people with disability make decisions?

* Guidelines for decision supporters: Yes
* Scenarios or Examples: Yes
* Information Sessions: Yes
* Support Networks: Yes
* Other: Yes

Decision supporters should have a good understanding of the service system and how to navigate across service contexts. They also need to know how and where to go for information that they don’t have and be able to communicate that information to the person they are supporting. They need to understand the persons lived experience and have developed a relationship and shared understanding of their current needs, preferences, and vision for their future. They should have a good understanding of SDM, and how the process can be communicated and utilised.

# Can you tell us about a time when someone helped you (or a person with disability) to make a big decision?

No

## What worked well?

No answer recorded

## What could have been better?

No answer recorded

# What is the best way to support people with disability to make decisions about their NDIS plan?

* Practice: Yes
* Peer Support Networks: Yes
* Information and Resources: Yes
* Guidance Tools: Yes
* Not Sure: No
* Other: Yes

The question seems to indicate that a plan is already established before the person becomes involved in decision-making. People should be consulted first about what they want and need, and the plan developed with their views centre stage. Thereafter, the decision supporter should assist by utilising the decision-making process to identify what decisions need now to be made and follow through with the 7 steps previously identified.

# Are there different things to consider for people with different disabilities or cultural backgrounds?

**An intellectual disability:** Yes, General Comment on all - Decision-supporters must be culturally competent in relation to the specific needs identified. Decision-supporters should receive appropriate training in the area of expertise required and should collaborate closely with community and orgs that represent those groups, and seek advice as to what they need to know to engage and communicate in the best possible way. The best alternative is that someone with knowledge and lived experience of that cultural group, supports another person from that group.

People with ID - Communication skills - understanding and confirming what the person has understood. Clarify and use plain English etc

**A disability that impacts how they think, a cognitive impairment:** Yes, Decision -supporters should be particularly aware of the time it might take working with a person experiencing difficulties with cognition. very regular check ins, do they need breaks, do the have all they need to inform their decision.

**A psychosocial disability:** Yes, Looking holistically at the persons needs and goals. What might seem important to others may not be important for a particular individual. Understand the impact of social isolation, stigma and discrimination might have had on the individual.

**A disability that impacts their ability to communicate:** Yes, Make sure all they need to communicate is available.

**From a CALD community:** Yes, Speak to community about how best to communicate.

**From an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Community:** Yes, Broader family and community relationships. Supporters from the community prefereably.

**From the LGBTIQA community:** Yes, Speak to community groups to understand what specific requirements this group might need

# How can we help reduce conflict of interest?

Organisations and decision- supporters must be supported in the skill of reflective practice. Support workers should be encouraged to seek advice from their team leader/ line managers in relation to potential conflicts of interest. Where a decision-supporter/ NDIS planner etc has concerns about another person exerting undue influence on the person being supported, they should enlist the support of their line manager. There should also be resources and policy guidance about ethical practice made available to all parties concerned.

# How can we help reduce undue influence?

Decision- supporters need to ensure the person they are supporting understands their rights. Some questions to ask are what is important to you? Do you know your rights? What keeps you happy, healthy and safe? What makes and doesnt make sense to you? What are your responsibilities to yourself and others in your life? What are the responsibilities of those that support you?

# What are your concerns (if any) around people with disability being more involved in making decisions for themselves?

The best outcomes is when people can maximise their autonomy and make independent decisions and are provided with the supports they need to identify their own goals and vision for recovery.

# What else could we do to help people with disability to make decisions for themselves? Is there anything missing?

Strongly promote training about SDM as a key skill and competency for support workers/ peer workers/ recovery coaches etc. Help understanding that SDM is an opportunity that people can utilise to maximise their independence. Promote help seeking of participants re SDM.

# Do you have any feedback on our proposed actions in Appendix C of the paper?

The proposals for next steps are well thought out and highly relevant. MHCC support all the initiatives envisaged and outlined in Appendix C. Look forward to seeing the progression of this initiative.