

W I S E 4 Ways to Facilitate Great Conversations Between Patients and their Substitute Decision Maker

Your patient's Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) will need to make wise healthcare decisions for them if they are unable to do so. Once your patient decides on their SDM, how can you help them tell their SDM what they would want?

Simple. Help your patient and their SDM clarify their **wishes, values and beliefs** as they relate to their future care.

Use the WISE acronym to help enable great conversations between your patients and their SDMs.

W arm up the conversation

Often the hardest part is initiating conversations with your patients.

Use these gentle opening lines to break the ice:

- "Does [name of SDM] know they are your SDM(s) and may need to make decisions on your behalf?"
- "Does [name of SDM] have the information they need to make decisions on your behalf?"
- "It's a good idea to think about what [name of SDM] needs to know to feel confident being your SDM."
- "Conversations can help [name of SDM] become the YOU expert. What information do they need to know to do that?"
- "Does [name of SDM] know what you would want or not want—because they is the one who needs to understand?"
- "It's helpful for [name of SDM] to understand what's important to you and how you make decisions."

I dentify why Advance Care Planning Conversations are important

Providing truly patient-centred care requires YOU to raise awareness about Advance Care Planning (ACP) conversations with your patients.

They may never have heard of it—they may have misperceptions. They need accurate information, perhaps repeated more than once. Ensure that your patient understands how ACP—and conversations relate to their future care and why they are critical.

Your patient and their SDM(s) need to understand that in Ontario, healthcare decisions must be made by a person (i.e., either them or their SDM). If the patient is unable to make a healthcare decision, the healthcare provider will look to the SDM to do it.

Have resources ready and give them complete information. Anything you can do to help prepare them to have ACP conversations will help them and their families.



Seize the opportunity

It is never too late until—it is.

A change in your patient's health can occur at any time. Patients who have already had ACP conversations with their SDM will experience less stress. SDMs who have received strong guidance will be more confident. However, starting an ACP conversation can be stressful.

As you work with patients, help them to find natural opportunities to start the ACP conversation. Your patients need to find the right time, all involved feel reasonably open and conversation is relaxed—not threatening.

These 4 strategies will help your patients seize the opportunity to start a discussion:

1. Get straight to the point

- "I need your help with something..."
- "I just filled out a booklet about myself and I would like to share it with you..."
- "I have just filled out a booklet and it made me think about the things most important to me and how I would like to be treated if I got sick. Maybe you could do it too and we could compare answers."
- "Even though I'm okay right now, I'm worried that... and I want to be prepared."

2. Use an experience or event

- "I was thinking about what happened to [name] and it made me realize..."

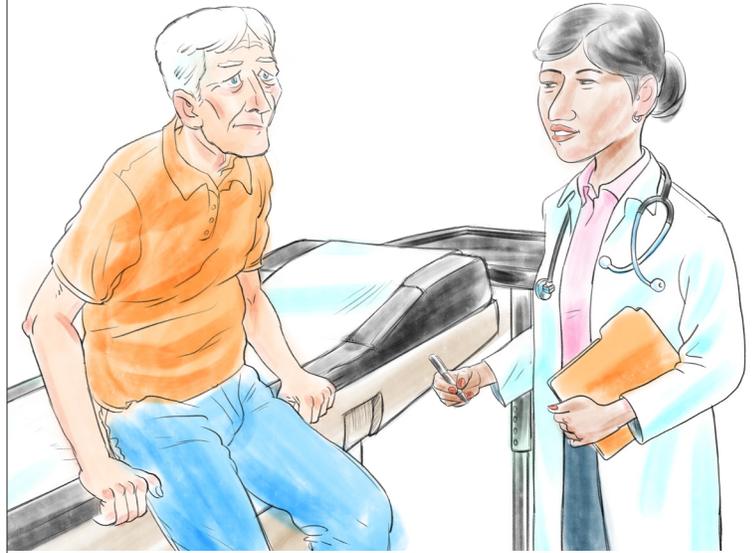
3. Lean on someone

- "I was talking to my [blank] today and I want you to know what we talked about."
- "I was talking to my [blank] and they said I need to start thinking about my future healthcare. Would you help me?"

4. Use media

- "I just read an article about [blank] and it got me thinking..."
- "Remember in that movie when [blank], it made me realize..."

Expert in YOU



Patients need to know how to talk with their SDM about their wishes, values, and beliefs. Your patients need to know that their goal is to help their SDM(s) to become an "expert in you". This expertise will help guide their future decisions.

Some great starters to help patients reflect on who they are with their SDM include:

- I am a person who likes...
- I am person that doesn't like...
- A good day for me includes...
- I get the most joy from doing X...
- Deep down, what I'm really afraid of is...

In general, patients need to help their SDM understand what they value and what gives their life meaning. Helping their SDM to become an expert in who they are ensures that the SDM has the information they need to make decisions on their behalf.

VITALOGUE

Are you ready to start the conversation?

▶ Play Vitalogue now!