



PROCEDURE 3.0 - CHOICE, CONTROL & CONSENT

Number	Procedure	Related National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality Practice Standards
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Procedures

3.0 (A) Assisting Service Users to Make Informed Decisions

Rationale

Better Together staff will, at all times, be mindful not to influence a service user to make a decision. However, a key staff person will assist an individual/family/carer to make informed decisions by:

- providing easy-to-read information about Better Together services; (see Policy 1.0 - Providing Service User Information);
- communicating in a positive way;
- Using appendix 1 Department of Human Services Guide “Making decisions and getting help if you need it’
- Help with decision making by providing relevant information and discussing consequences of actions and associated risks.
- helping to define problems; and
- brain-storming ideas and options which might help an individual reach their identified goals.
- Proactively seeking to balance Better Together’s duty of care with a service user’s dignity of risk
- Use the 4 step Risk Assessment Matrix when undertaking activities or skills new to person and if necessary follow the Risk identification and Proactive Response process

Detailed Procedure



Better Together staff, at all levels, will:

- encourage a service user to develop positive self identities, exercise choice, have control over their lives and express their preferences;
- present information in a variety of ways depending on the individual's communication and comprehension abilities to enable the individual to make choices;
- involve the individual, and where appropriate their family and/or carer in all decision-making which affects them;
- When a Service User has a legally appointed guardian/administrator, decisions are to be made only about the issue or issues on which the service user is unable to decide (see procedure 3.0 (B) Seeking Consent)
- refer to the policy 9.1 Positive Behaviour and Reduction of Restrictive Practice when decisions around restrictive practices are being made or being used inappropriately
- Advise the participant, that Better Together will assist them to access an interpreter if this is considered to be of assistance to understanding and decision making for the participant or their family.
- Support the participant to make their own decisions. Where a parent/family member disagrees with a decision made by an adolescent or young adult participating in Better Together programs, Better Together managers will support independent decision making by facilitating discussion, understanding and assessment of any risk, within the framework used in Appendix 1 Department of Human Services Guide "Making decisions and getting help if you need it" booklet to build a service users capacity.
- encouraging people with disability, family, friends, carers and advocates to support independent decision making, choice and control.
- Ensure staff have sufficient skills, knowledge and ability to implement the procedure.

3.0 (B) Seeking Consent

Rational

Consent: is the permission given by a person or substitute decision maker concerning decisions that affect a person's life. Consent requires a person to be informed about what they are giving consent to or for. Consent requires an understanding of the decision at hand which is referred to as capacity. When a person has the capacity to make a particular decision, they can:

- understand the facts and choices involved
- weigh up the consequences, and
- Communicate the decision.

Some people may need support to exercise their capacity to make decisions that affect them, and to increase their decision making skills and confidence. Service Users are always presumed to have the capacity to make their own decisions and give consent when it is required, unless there is evidence otherwise. We don't assume a person lacks capacity because of their age, appearance, disability, behaviour, language skills or any other condition or characteristic.

For children, young people and adults with a disability supported by Better Together, the



Individual/involvement of family/ significant others/advocates/guardians in decision making on key service delivery processes (e.g. individual goal planning) is dependent on:

- the relevant decision making rights for family/significant others/advocates/guardians, as determined by their legal status in relation to the person receiving support
- the expressed wishes of the person receiving support; and
- The assessed need for such advocacy

Detailed Procedure

Better Together will;

- Educate and support service user to understand they have the right to change their mind and retract their consent.
- Support a Service User by being respectful should they choose to want stop using our service. See procedure 1.0 (J) Service User Exits
- Promote and support the notion that consent is required for each and every decision. Consent on one occasion or about one event does not imply or assure consent for future decisions, occasions or events.
- Where a legally appointed guardian is appointed a legally appointed guardian must give formal informed consent for life decisions that they have been allocated to make which can vary this can include, accommodation, medical and dental treatment, forensic procedures, and behaviour support
- Where a legally appointed administrator is appointed the Administrator, Trust Manager or person appointed under a Power of Attorney must provide formal informed consent for financial matters

<p>When consent is required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when a participant provides us sensitive personal information • when providing supports and services to participants • when creating or reviewing plans for participants • before a participant begins a planned activity • before a participant undertakes a health assessment • when supporting participants to have medical or dental treatment • when supporting participants to take medicine • if we intend to share a participant’s personal information with a third party • before planning the use of any of the participant’s funds • before commencing a restrictive practice as part of a behaviour support plan • when images or video of the participant is to be used for promotional purposes • When a forensic procedure is required for a police investigation
<p>When consent is not required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first aid medical or dental treatment • When urgent medical treatment is required to save the person’s life, to prevent



serious damage to a person’s health or to alleviate significant pain or distress.
Who
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applies to all representatives including key management personnel, directors, full time workers, part time workers, casual workers, contractors and volunteers.

Autonomous decision making

- for participants with the capacity to make their own choices without support, all decisions must be referred to them
- participants with the capacity to make their own choices can talk to family or friends, or carry out their own research before making any decisions
- Participants are supported to make informed choices about the benefits and risks of decisions under consideration.

Supported decision making

- participants that need help to make decisions and give consent will be supported in ways that best suits the individual, e.g. arranging an interpreter, supporter or advocate, getting information, communication tools, or arranging a certain time or place that best supports the participant
- where a participant has been assessed as not having the capacity to make his or her own decisions, we will support substitute decision makers, either informal or formal
- participants are always assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions no matter if their decision-making capacity is only small
- At any stage, participants are provided sufficient time to consider and review their options and seek advice if required, e.g. during assessment, planning, provision, review and exit.

Impaired decision-making capacity

- if a participant is assessed to have impaired decision-making capacity, substitute decision making is required impaired decision-making capacity is when a person is unable to make decisions at a particular time because they are incapable of either:
 - understanding any information that may be relevant to the decision
 - retaining such information
 - using such information in the course of making the decision
 - communicating his or her decision in any manner
 - By reason of being comatose or otherwise unconscious, is unable to make particular decision about his or her medical treatment.
- A participant’s capacity can be lost or regained depending on a number of factors.

Informal decision making

- informal decision making is where a person making a decision on behalf of another person has not been legally appointed
- informal decision makers can include the person’s family, friends, carer or nominated support, and can help make decisions on behalf of a participant about who the participant wishes to see, their work, leisure, recreation, holidays or accessing services



- Details for informal decision makers is recorded for each participant and this information is available to all relevant workers.

Formal decision making

- formal decision making is where a legally appointed guardian or person responsible can make decisions for a participant
- formal decision making can assist if there is conflict over decisions being made about the person
- formal decision making can assist if that person's safety or the safety of others is at risk and a guardianship order is in place by the relevant state or territory authority
- formal decision making can assist where there is specific legislation that requires it, such as consent for medical treatment
- details for formal decision makers is recorded for each participant and this information is available to all relevant workers
- Details of formal decision makers are recorded for participants, if relevant, and are available to all relevant workers.

Substitute decision makers

- if there is uncertainty over who can provide consent when a participant with an impaired decision-making capacity requires it, the order of priority is:
 - a) guardian (including an enduring, private or public guardian) who has been appointed with a medical and dental consent function
 - b) a spouse, de facto spouse, parent or partner who has a close and continuing relationship with the person
 - c) the carer or person who arranges care regularly and is unpaid (the carer's pension does not count as payment)
 - d) the carer of the person before they went into residential care, or
 - e) a close friend or relative
- if a person above is not capable of consenting for the participant, or they refuse to consent, the next person in the hierarchy can consent
- if we think it is in a participant's best interest to get help from a substitute decision maker, we should:
 - a) explain to the participant why we think someone needs to make a decision for them
 - b) ask the relevant state or territory authority (usually a civil administrative tribunal) to look at whether or not to appoint a guardian or administrator
- an application for consent by the relevant state or territory authority is required for participants with impaired decision-making capacity for medical treatments which include:
 - a) special medical treatment (e.g. termination of pregnancy, treatment likely to result in significant side effects, or for removal of an tissue for transplanting to another person)
 - b) significant medical or dental treatment, and there is no person responsible or the person responsible is not available, or
 - c) Significant or routine medical treatment when the patient is objecting and there is no appointed guardian authorised to override such objection.



Consent rights for participants

- consent is required every time a participant seeks access to services to ensure they are fully informed of their rights and our obligations
- participants have the right to make decisions about things that affect their lives and to take calculated risks
- children and young people have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development
- each participant must have sufficient time to consider and review their options and seek advice if required, at any stage of support provision, including assessment, planning, provision, review and exit
- Each participant has the right to withdraw or amend their consent if they wish.

Our consent responsibilities

- encourage and support participants to make informed decisions when their consent is required
- ensure consent arrangements for participants, including any legal authorisations required, are recorded in the participant's file, and are reviewed and updated regularly
- ensure consent for financial matters is obtained from the participant, or legally appointed financial manager or person appointed under a Power of Attorney
- obtain consent from the participant or legally appointed guardian, for life decisions such as accommodation, medical and dental treatment, forensic procedures, and behaviour support
- obtain consent from the participant prior to collecting, using and storing a participant's information and provide reasons why the information is needed
- obtain consent before disclosing any of a participant's personal information (such as case notes, management plans or assessments) to other parties
- only disclose participant information without consent if we believe the person is at risk of harm, an unlawful act has occurred or as otherwise required by law
- Not influence or limit decision making and self-determination with our interests, beliefs or values when providing decision making support.

How we obtain consent

- Consent from a participant or a substitute decision maker should always be in writing but if this is not practicable, verbal consent is acceptable providing it is later confirmed in writing.

When consent is refused

- a note of a participant's refusal to consent must be stored in the participant's file
- There are no consequences for a participant in terms of receiving services.

When consent is not possible

- informal decision making can help make decisions for the participant when there is no legal arrangement



- Formal decision making may be required if there is conflict over decisions about the participant, the participant's safety or the safety of others is at risk, or the law requires it.

3.0 (C) Communicating Effectively with Services Users

Rationale

Better Together recognises that communication is a human right and fundamental to all aspects of life. It is the basis by which people interact, develop relations and seek to meet their needs. The lack of effective communication systems can significantly impact on an individual's ability to make decisions and participate in decision-making processes around their needs, dreams and goals. It can also impact upon an individual's relationship with their family, friends and support networks.

Definitions

Alternative and Augmentative Communication is the term used for all communication that is not speech, but used to enhance or replace speech. An AAC system is the whole combination of methods used for communication which can be manual or through technical communication displays.

Individuals with *Complex Communication Needs* are those for whom gesturing, speech or written communication is temporarily or permanently inadequate to meet all of their communication needs. Individuals with complex communication needs rely on the skills of people supporting them to be able to communicate more effectively.

Detailed Procedure

Better Together has made a commitment to:

- Support Service user that need help to make decisions and give consent will be supported in ways that best suits the individual, e.g. arranging an interpreter, supporter or advocate, getting information, communication tools, or arranging a certain time or place that best supports the participant
- Advise a service user that the advocate can be a person of their choice, a friend or family member, or Better Together can assist them to access an Advocacy Service, either directly or through providing the contact details. (*see Policy 1.0- Engaging an Advocate to Speak on Behalf of a Service User*).
- provide an environment where all people, in particular individuals with Complex Communication Needs, are truly heard and participate in every aspect of the service they receive from Better Together;
- acknowledge an individual's existing communication methods and attempt to complement them with any proposed strategies;
- assist service users who have Complex Communication Needs to make decisions and choices by asking, where appropriate, the family/carer to assist with a Communication Overview describing the individual's Alternative and Augmentative Communication system, to be used in the support plan, a copy of which will be:



- used, where appropriate, to seek the individual's input into their support planning;
 - kept in the Individual File;
 - provided to his or her support staff (see Policy 2.0 -Communicating a Service User's Changing Needs to Support Staff);
 - monitored and reviewed annually or earlier as required.
- identify the skills support staff require to assist the individual with Complex Communication Needs;
 - appoint staff with those skills or arrange the required training in accordance with Policy 10- Staff Training and Development;
 - provide families/carers with accurate and up-to-date resources to assist individuals with Complex Communication Needs to communicate to their optimum;
 - Information is provided in a language or communication format that Service User, families, Carers, advocates and guardians can understand or have interpreters engaged to support such as an easy-to-read format e.g. pictures, large print
 - provide publicly available and accessible information on Better Together Policies and programs and where necessary communicate appropriately with people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds when necessary;
 - develop wherever feasible any new (or substantially revised) policies or programs that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, in consultation with people from those backgrounds;

3.0 (D) *Avoiding or Minimising Risks Associated with a Service User's Decision*

Rationale

Better Together will take reasonable care to avoid risks, without unduly limiting the ability of service users to take responsibility for their own decisions and choices. It is essential that Better Together staff are focused upon how they can perform their role in a way which maximises the opportunities for the service user. To fulfil their duty of care commitment in the least restrictive way Better Together support staff may be required to:

- assess the likelihood of foreseeable benefits against the likelihood and extent of foreseeable harm;
- look for ways that minimise the risk of harm, without sacrificing or losing the benefit and ensure that any decision will be based on a balance of the foreseeable harm against the foreseeable benefit to protect the health and safety of all people involved (see Policy 11.0 Safety and Risk Management).

Definition

Dignity of risk means that all persons with a disability have the right to be treated with dignity and respect in relation to their individual needs and circumstances and all aspects of their lives. It refers to the ability of a person to decide to take a safe risk, and to the balance between taking risks and encouraging independence.



It is based on the premise that each individual has a right to experience and learn from situations that may be a long-term or short-term threat or risk to their well being.

Duty of care is a legal concept meaning the responsibility to take reasonable care to avoid causing harm to another person. A duty of care exists when it could reasonably be expected that a person's actions, or failure to act, might cause injury to another person.

Challenging Behaviour means behaviour of the adult that either causes physical harm to the adult or others, or represents a serious risk of harm to the adult or others. Whilst challenging behaviour usually refers to a challenge to the service, it also presents a challenge to the service user to participate in and/or have access to activities, services or experiences.

Better Together considers an *incident* to be reportable if any person associated with services provided by Better Together is injured, put at risk or distressed.

Least restrictive way means the use of a restrictive practice that ensures the safety of the adult or others and, having regard to this, imposes the minimum limits on the freedom of the adult as is practicable in the circumstances.

Detailed Procedure

At times Better Together staff may need to consider and perhaps discuss the following factors with an individual/family/carer and/or any others involved:

- will the likely outcome be life-giving or life-threatening?
- is the option one that a person of a similar age and lifestyle would choose?
- will the community be supportive of this option?
- do others need to be consulted regarding the option?
- can risks associated with the option be removed or minimised to balance the support worker's duty of care with the individual's right to dignity of risk?

Occasionally Better Together support staff may need to over-ride a service user's choice. This will only occur if their own, or the individual's and/or another person's health and/or safety is in jeopardy. In this case Better Together support staff will:

- if applicable, consult with the individual's relevant health advisors/professionals to ascertain any heightened risk factors related to the proposed activity;
- explain to the individual in a manner they will understand, the consequences of their decision;
- assist the individual to take responsibility for decisions and actions in a supportive way;
- if considered necessary, e.g. decision-making is associated with challenging behaviour, communicate the incident to others by:
 - speaking with key staff and/or the family/carer;
 - recording the details in the service user's file notes for the information of other support staff (see Policy 2.0 Individual Needs, Values and Planning);
 - documenting the incident in the relevant Files Notes (see Policy 2.0 Individual Needs, Values and Planning); and/or
 - completing an Incident/Critical Incident Report and following the incident reporting process in accordance with (see Policy 11.0 Safety and Risk Management) which may lead to the implementation of a Positive Behaviour Support Plan (see Supplementary Policy 9.01 Positive Behaviour Support and



Reduction of Restrictive Practices) or changes to the service user's Risk, Triggers Management section of Flow Logic.

3.0 (E) Choice of Supports Delivery, Timing and Activity.

Rational

Better Together is committed to providing flexible supports, activities. The following procedures have been developed to assist with a service users choices in support delivery

Detailed Procedure

Better Together staff will;

- Support Service user to identify who they may wish to be involved in any consultation process such as family members, friends and/or advocates in setting up activities and supports (see policy 2.0 Individual Needs, Values and Planning)
- Be as flexible as possible when rostering supports around a service users requests. Staffing allocation and capacity will be considered.
- move and change ongoing support times and days to support a service user to access an activity, event or valued role that is best suited to their needs and goals.
- If an activity is identified that would best support the service user in their goal after supports are already put in place, Better Together will do their best to move supports to a time that can accommodate attending this activity.
- Promote mainstream activities to a service users as the activities of first preference in strategies for achieving Service User goals.
- Limit activities created by Better Together, and be used as a last resort. Should no mainstream activity be available for service users lifestyle coaches will consult with Better Together management around the development of any new activities that might be accessible to external community members.
- Use Social Role Valorisation framework to support service users in understanding activity choices and promote role development wherever possible.
- Record decisions and preferences of each individual, recorded in each service user person's file and provided to relevant staff so they can tailor services to the individual and to ensure consistency across the service.
- File notes will record previous advice on how to best to support each person to exercise choice and control to the degree they wish, any changes in preferences are recorded in a service user files notes for continuity of supports
- offer a service that is flexible and responsive to the changing needs and choices of service users by ensuring:
 - a) Individual Support Plans are held and implemented (see Policy 2.0 Individual Needs, Values and Planning);
 - b) due process is followed, enabling regular feedback from support staff to filter through the correct channels to ensure an individual's support is monitored;
 - c) Individual Support Plan's are reviewed at least annually or when significant changes occur or on request, giving all parties the opportunity to reflect on



- previously identified goals and strategies, measure progress and make changes and decisions regarding an individual's future goals and direction;
- d) Service User Surveys are distributed to families/carers annually;
 - e) individuals, their families/carers and/or advocates are encouraged to contact Better Together if any concerns arise regarding an individual's support (see Policy 7.0- Inviting Service User Feedback).

3.0 (F) Choice of Supports Staffing

Rationale

Better Together is committed to providing service users with workers that are suitable to their needs and interests and where possible be able to meet the wants of the service user with gender and age.

Detailed Procedure

Better Together will;

- where possible and within a staff members capacity allow service user first choice with who their lifestyle coach is.
- Keep staffing preferences on their file
- Where possible provide lifestyle coaches from their preference ie; gender, age etc.
- Provide lifestyle coaches for service users who appear to be best fit for their preferences and demographics.
- Where possible when recruiting lifestyle coaches for a particular Service User, engagement with the service user and their family will be sort.

Definitions

Best fit: is where a lifestyle coach is of similar age, and has similar interest of the service user

Related Better Together Policies and Procedures

Policy 1.0 Service Access

Policy 2.0 Individual Needs, Values and Planning

Policy 5.0 Human Rights

Policy 7.0 Complaints and Disputes

Policy 9.01 Positive Behaviour and Reduction of Restrictive Practices

Policy 10.0 Staff Recruitment, Employment and Development

Policy 11.0 Safety and Risk Management



Making decisions and getting help if you need it

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Introduction

The freedom to make decisions about things which affect our lives is a right that everyone should enjoy.

Because of your disability you might need help to make decisions and tell others about your choices.

Your family, friends or support staff may help you with things like:

- explaining what decision you have to make and what it means
- making sure you can use your preferred communication method.

The Department of Human Services has written a booklet called *Supporting Decision Making: a guide to supporting people with a disability to make their own decisions*. The guide is for people who support you so they can help you make decisions about things that are important to you.

There are seven decision making principles. These are shown in the picture on page 2 of this booklet.

The guide has been written to give you information about what the seven principles mean and what you should be able to expect from the people who support you.



What decisions are we talking about?

There are many types of decisions, including:

Day to day

- what to wear
- when and what to eat
- when to get up or go to bed.

Lifestyle and recreation

- who to be friends with
- having sex with someone
- going to cultural or religious events
- keeping fit
- shopping
- smoking or drinking
- going to the pub / club / cinema
- holidays.

Education and employment

- what school, university or other education place you go to
- choosing what type of job you would like to do.

Living arrangements

- who to live with and where
- decorating your home or room.

Access to services

- choosing the supports you need
- choosing service providers and support staff.

Healthcare



- what doctor, dentist, therapist or specialist you go to.

Financial

- buying everyday items
- paying bills
- paying for expensive items
- banking.

Legal

- signing contracts
- providing consent
- giving power of attorney
- getting married or divorced
- making a will.

You may be able to make some or most of these decisions on your own.

You might need help with some decisions.

Someone else might need to make a decision for you.



Seven decision making principles





1. I have the right to make decisions

What does this mean?

It means that you are allowed to make decisions about anything that is important to you.

Some things to think about

- you only need to make a decision by yourself if you feel able or comfortable to do so
- you need to take responsibility for the decisions you make
- sometimes your choices will be limited – for example, you need to think about how much things cost and whether you can afford them, or whether what you want to do is against the law
- your family, friends and support staff should help you if you want them to get the information you need to make decisions.

What can you expect from the people who support you?

People should:

- know that you have a right to make a decision about anything that is important to you
- remind everyone else that you have the right to make decisions
- help you get information you might need to help you make decisions
- give you time to think about what you want to do
- understand that you might find it difficult to make decisions about some things and that it's okay not to have an answer straight away
- not assume they know what you want
- help you make a complaint if you think you are not being allowed to make decisions.



2. I can make decisions

What does this mean?

It means that you are the person who best knows what is important to you and that you are allowed to make decisions about these things.

Some things to think about

- people around you should accept that you can make decisions on your own unless you ask for help
- even though it is your decision, you can ask for information or help from other people before you decide
- it is okay if you sometimes don't feel able to make a decision that you would usually be able to (for example because you are not feeling well)
- if someone else has to make a decision for you about something (such as signing a contract) they should include you as much as possible.

What can you expect from the people who support you?

People should:

- know that you can make decisions
- remind other people who support you that you can make decisions
- be aware that sometimes you might not feel able to make a decision that you would normally make
- work with you if you are having difficulty making a decision
- talk to you and (if you want them to) your family, a friend or other supporter, if they think you can't make a decision
- write down their reasons and talk to their manager before taking any action to get someone else to make a decision for you.



3. I might sometimes need help to make decisions

What does this mean?

It means that, even though it is your decision, you can ask for information or help from other people before you decide.

Some things to think about

- you might need help on some decisions and not others
- the type of help you need for one decision might be different for another decision
- if you ask for help, people should communicate with you in the style that you prefer and understand
- you can ask for help to tell other people of your decisions
- you might need time to make some decisions.

What can you expect from the people who support you?

People should:

- help you make your decisions if you want them to
- help you get the information you need to help you make your decisions
- get to know you so they know how to help
- accept that you might need time to make some decisions
- understand how you like to communicate
- help you to communicate your decisions if you want them to.



4. I might be able to make decisions about some things but not others

What does this mean?

It means that all decisions are different and you might find some are easier to make than others.

Some things to think about

- you might be okay about making decisions about things you already know, but not new things
- you might be okay to decide about something one day but not another day
- you might have made a decision in the past that did not work out, but that doesn't mean you can't try again.

What can you expect from the people who support you?

People should:

- understand that you might be able to make decisions about some things but not others
- help you get the information you need to help you make your decisions
- understand how a change in your life might mean you no longer want to make a certain decision
- help you (if you want them to) to remember what you decided last time on something.



5. I can learn from trying things out

What does this mean?

It means that sometimes it is easier to make choices if you can try things first.

Some things to think about

- it can be a good idea to try things out to see whether you like them or not
- you might need help to find out what you can do
- you might meet new people if you try something different
- you can do something that people who care about you think is risky as long as you understand what will happen if it does not quite work out as planned.

What can you expect from the people who support you?

People should:

- help you to try new things, even if you are not really clear what you want to try
- allow you time to explore and/or try new activities
- help you to understand if there is a chance you could get hurt by doing something and whether you still want to try it
- help you to make sure that what you want to do will not cause harm to someone else.



6. I might want to change my mind

What does this mean?

It means that it is okay to change your mind about a decision you have made.

Some things to think about

- sometimes you might want to change a decision if you get new information
- sometimes you might want to change your mind after you have tried something and do not want to do it any more
- changing your mind when you have new information can be a good thing
- sometimes you might not be able to change straight away — for example, if there is a contract for a service, you might have to give notice.

What can you expect from the people who support you?

People should:

- accept that it is okay for you to change your mind
- make time for you to explore your thoughts and feelings before, during and after decisions
- help you to get information that will explain any consequences of changing a decision, including any financial or legal obligations.



7. I might make decisions others might not agree with

What does this mean?

It means that is okay for you to make your own decision about something even if someone else disagrees.

Some things to think about

- you might want to do something that your family, friends or support workers don't agree with
- the ideas of family, friends or support workers can be important and may help with your decision, but it is your decision
- if you make a decision that others disagree with, you have to take responsibility for what happens
- sometimes workers or supporters might say you can't do something because they think there's a risk for you or someone else — you will need to talk to them about your understanding of the risk and what you will do about it.

What can you expect from the people who support you?

People should:

- make the effort to understand and respect your values and attitudes, and how they might affect your decisions or actions
- not let their own values and attitudes be more important than yours
- respect any concerns raised by your supporters and help you talk to them to help them understand your decision
- help you think about risks for your decision and how to manage those risks
- talk to you and their manager if they disagree with any decisions you make or are worried about what will happen because of your decision.



Substitute decision making

There might be some decisions that you are not able to make for yourself. This might be about your money, a legal matter, a health issue, where you live or who you live with.

A staff member or other supporter may think it is in your best interest to get help from a substitute decision maker. If so, they should:

- explain to you why they think someone needs to make a decision for you
- ask the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal to look at your situation and decide whether or not to appoint a guardian or administrator to make the decision for you.

A guardian or administrator must:

- act in your best interest
- consider your wishes as much as possible
- encourage you to make your own decisions.

Guardians and administrators can be a family member or friend.