



**Delfini Group**™, LLC



*Evidence- & Value-based Solutions For Health Care  
Clinical Improvement Consults, Content, Seminars, Training & Tools*

## Patient Tools: Help for Creating Patient Communication Aids

# Patient Communication Aid Development Tips Tool

*For interpersonal encounters, see Delfini Patient Encounter Map:  
The GLIDE Approach*

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### Our Mission –

To assist medical leaders, clinicians and other health care professionals by ~

- Bringing science into medical practice in an **easy-to-understand** way.
- Using **simplified methods** to help navigate the complexities of such areas as evidence-based medicine and other topics.
- Building **competencies** and **confidence** in improving medical care through our well received consultations, educational programs and tools.
- Providing inspiration to others to **improve** medical care and help bring about needed change.



# Delfini Group Patient Information & Decision Aid Tool

Read this first, then use the tips and suggestions that follow to record notes to help you plan an effective communication aid for your patients.

Providing care "*in the best way*," should include care that is –

- *Safe*
- *Effective*
- *Patient-centered*
- *Timely*
- *Efficient*
- *Equitable*

From the Institute of Medicine.  
*Crossing the Quality Chasm.*  
National Academy Press, 2001.

Patients need information about their choices which addresses --

- *benefits,*
- *harms,*
- *costs,*
- *risks,*
- *uncertainties, and*
- *alternatives.*

Information should be **quantified** where possible.

## Patient Care Goals for Health Care Organizations & Clinical Staff: An Ideal Framework

### For our patients:

In the **best way** and through best use of **resources**, strive for optimal quality of life by achieving the best possible **health outcomes** --

- Improved **physical** and **emotional functioning**
- Reduced **symptoms**
- And reduced **morbidity** and **mortality**.

Accomplish this through a **patient-centered care experience** that is **satisfying** to patients and which honors and practically supports the **needs, values** and **preferences** of **individual patients** by giving them **choice**.

Do this by applying **reliable and clinically useful evidence**.

Use that information to **identify** and **communicate** with patients to assist them in making choices about the care they receive.

Patients need help to –

- **understand** the issues they face,
- gain enough **information** and **support** to help them make a **decision**,
- **obtain care or take actions**.

Patients have individual preferences for decision styles depending upon their unique circumstances. These styles are **autonomous, physician-directed and shared**. Patient-centered care involves the patient in deciding which decision style to use.

Physicians may wish to favor a more prescriptive style where the evidence is strong. Shared-decision making is often most optimal where there are uncertainties and/or equally reasonable alternatives.

"**Reliable evidence**," means scientific evidence which has passed a rigorous critical appraisal for validity. Preferably it was obtained through systematic means.

### Patients want –

- ✓ **Engagement with trusted clinicians and their teams.**
- ✓ **Relationships, partnerships, information**
  - **Support, dialogue, reassurance, treatment, warmth, empathy, respect**
  - **Accommodation of needs, values and preferences**

# Delfini Group Patient Information & Decision Aid Tool

<b>Date: Project Title:</b> <b>Requestor:</b>	
<b>Content: Validity &amp; Relevance</b> <b>Is it valid? Accurate • Balanced • Complete (enough) data</b> <b>Relevant for whom? Intended audience</b>	
<b>1. What do you want to communicate (considering validity issues of accuracy, balance and the right amount of information)?</b>	<b>Issues to consider including “Patient Care Goals – An Ideal Framework” above:</b> a) What do I have? What might I get? Why do I have it? How did I get it? b) What might it do to me? What might it do to others? What is unknown? c) What choices do I have to deal with it? How will those choices affect me? d) What’s your advice? What do I do? How do I do it?
<b>What will be the key components?</b> <b>Prevention • Screening • Diagnosis • Treatment • Prognosis • Follow-up • Maintenance</b>	
<b>2. Who is the intended audience?</b>	
<b>3. What’s going to happen to the patient (e.g., physical outcomes, process steps)?</b>	
<b>4. What are the possible outcomes?</b> ✓ Symptom relief • Morbidity • Mortality • Function • Quality of Life ✓ Benefits • Harms • Costs • Risks • Uncertainties • Alternatives ✓ Effect on Patient Satisfaction	
<b>5. Do you have reliable and clinically useful evidence?</b> ▪ If yes, consider making the patient aid a “prescriptive” one that guides toward the evidence-based choice. ▪ If not, consider making the tool a choice-based one that helps elicits patient preferences based on their needs, values and preferences. <b>Decision?</b>	
<b>6. How will you quantify the information and provide meaningful anchors for your intended audience?</b>	
<b>Vehicle: Media &amp; Access</b> <b>How do you wish to deliver it? Intrapersonal • Publication • Intranet • Telephonic • Video • Other?</b>	

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<b>Date:</b> <b>Project Title:</b> <b>Requestor:</b>	
<b>Will it actually reach them?</b>	
7. What will you choose for delivering the communication?	
8. How do you know or what will you do to ensure your audience gets the communication?	
<b>Form: Function &amp; Usability</b> <b>What is the purpose? Information only • Decision Support</b> <b>How will you design it? Design = Utility</b> <b>How might it be received? Individual perspective</b>	
9. What will be your scope?	
10. What background do you intend to provide?	
11. What, if any, will be your disclaimers?	
12. Is the purpose of this tool – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information only? <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>▪ Decision support? <input type="checkbox"/> If decision support, see sidebar for considerations →</li> <li>▪ Action aid? <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) How will you prep the user in the use of the aid?</li> <li>b) How will you accommodate individual needs, values and preferences?</li> <li>c) What valid and appropriate comparisons can you make?</li> <li>d) Can you show causality and how?</li> </ul>
13. Choices for communications considering variation in the ways individuals receive information (make notes in the fields below): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Words, pictures, numbers:</li> <li>b) Multiple viewpoints:</li> <li>c) Ways to help comprehension:</li> <li>d) Tone (and framing):</li> <li>e) General examples – particular illustrations:</li> <li>f) Subpopulation issues – gender, culture, specific, other:</li> <li>g) Sequencing and layering of information:</li> <li>h) Possibilities to customize and personalize:</li> </ul>	
14. Choices for design – Design = Utility - notes:	
15. Choices for visual display of information (consider text tables, graphical formats, small multiples):	

# *Delfini Group* Patient Information & Decision Aid Tool

<b>Date:</b> <b>Project Title:</b> <b>Requestor:</b>
16. <b>Other Comments:</b>
17. <b>For additional information, as needed:</b>