Supported Decision Making
How SDM Works for Older Adults

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Making Choices?
Supported Decision-Making

“a recognized alternative to guardianship through which people with disabilities use friends, family members, and professionals to help them understand the situations and choices they face, so they may make their own decisions without the “need” for a guardian.” - Blanck & Martinis, 2015.
"Supported Decision-Making": What?

- **Supports and/or services** that help people make their own decisions, by using friends, family members, professionals, and other people they trust:
  - To help understand the issues and choices;
  - Ask questions;
  - Receive explanations in language they understand; and
  - **Communicate** their own decisions to others.

(e.g., Blanck & Martinis 2014, Dinerstein 2012, Salzman 2011)

Thank you Morgan!
Person Driven Planning
Supported Decision Making

- All Adults have a fundamental right to make choices
- Adults with severe limitations can express preferences
- The Person should be empowered to make decisions, and be supported by advisors
We all do it

- Everyone has a right to make choices
- Everyone needs support or assistance with some choices
Older Adults with Changes in Memory and Cognition

- Early diagnosis is becoming more common
- Treatment
- Planning
- Quality of life
Why is SDM important?

- Person Centered – Person Driven
- Preserving Rights
- Using the decision making model across the progression of the illness
- Discharge Planning Story
Planning for SDM

- Selecting advisors
- Training the advisors
- Legally empowering the advisors
Selecting Advisors

- Who does the Person trust?
- Who can give meaningful advice?
- Who will work to assure the Persons’ choices are honored?
- Who will place the Person first?
- Ready, Willing, and Able to serve
Training the advisors

- Communication tools
- Always – always – always explain and ask the Person what they want
- Offer choices
- Know beliefs, values, goals of the Person
- History of the Person, and trigger points for change
- Having “The Conversation”
Advance Planning
Empowering the Advisors

- As dementia progresses
- Others will start to question the capacity of the Person
- Powers of Attorney
- Other financial arrangements
- Advance Health Care Directives
Always keep the Person At the Center

“No tubes, take me home”
Balancing Empowerment and the Progressive Nature of Dementia

- Persons who are actively involved in choices - Retain ability longer
- Dementia will progress to the point of being unable to express choice
- Those closest – will be able to understand the Person longer than others
Concerns you will hear

- Abuse, and exploitation
- The choices are not “in her best interest”
- He asks the same question, over and over
- She forgets the choice that she made
- It is so hard to communicate
- Sooner or later SDM won’t work