Shared Decision Making
for patients on surgical waiting list

NHS

1 Getting ready

Recommended to inform the patient of an appointment (date/time/call) and advising them to consider 'what matters to them'.

Have the following available:
- Patient notes
- Clinic letter
- Key investigations
- Latest imaging

Does the person have any factors which make a telephone consultation inappropriate (e.g. hearing impairment, translation needs, communication, etc.).

Clinician thought: If appropriate, calculate risk scoring for the patient and procedure.

Consider risk evaluation for COVID-19:
- Age
- Sex
- Ethnicity
- Comorbidities
- Occupation
- Living arrangements

Be familiar with the availability of alternative treatments and how they are booked, e.g.
- Physiotherapy
- Pain clinics
- Supported self management

2 Introduction

Confirm the patient's:
- Identity
- Name
- Date of birth

"Hello, my name is"

Is it quiet, safe and confidential? (With option to defer call.)

"It's been a while since we spoke. Things might have changed for you and of course we need to talk about the coronavirus. Have you thought about what you would like to talk about on this call?"

"I apologise that things have been delayed because of the coronavirus."

Cite which surgery and at which hospital site.

3 The patient

"Tell me how you are managing with (x condition) at the moment?"

- Symptoms
- Medication
- General health
- Support circle

"What are you hoping the procedure will achieve for you?"

Clinician thought: If expectations are not realistic, discuss this further during 'options talk'.

"How are you feeling about going into a hospital at the moment?"

"Is there anything specific that worries you?"

"Are you aware that patients who have surgery at the moment will need to self-isolate?"

Clinician thought: Be familiar with the latest testing/isolation guidance.

Symptoms

How is your:
- Pain/discomfort
- Fatigue/sleep
- Mood
- Mobility
- Eating/exercise
- Screen for red flags

Medication

"Have any of your medications changed recently?"

"Are you prescribed any medicine that requires monitoring such as regular blood tests?"

"Are you prescribed anything from a specialist clinic, e.g. chemotherapy?"

Health

"Have there been any changes in your other health conditions?"

Support

"Have there been any changes in who is around to support you?"

Conversation prompts

"Do you have any concerns about COVID-19?"

"What are you most worried about?"

Risks to consider after surgery

"Who lives at home with you?"

Check for individuals that are:
- Shielding
- Pregnant
- Immune suppressed
- Unwell
- High risk categories
- Consider other recovery issues that might apply to the patient

4 Options talk

"We want the best option. So, let's talk about what would be most appropriate for you at the moment."

"Let's go through the pros and cons of each option and what it would mean for you."

"Let's talk about what matters to you as a person and then look at each option in more detail."

"It's sensible for us to have an honest conversation about your risk of catching COVID-19 whilst in hospital."

"Does what we have discussed sound helpful and is there anything you would like to ask or don't understand?"

"Putting all that together what do you think?"

Options for treatment (to be agreed locally)

Surgery
Explanation of all appropriate invasive alternatives.

Medical
Non-invasive options or medication.

Therapies & support
E.g. physiotherapy, OT, nutrition and psychological wellbeing.

The effect of delaying treatment
Risk of delay and harm to patient.

"The likelihood of a good outcome for you with this option is…"

"This option is likely to achieve…but it won't be able to achieve…for you."

Conversation prompts

Consider:
- Risk profile (race, immune status, etc.)
- Expected length of stay
- Local prevalence
- Occupation
- Living arrangements

Clinician thought: Has the patient fully understood the risks, or are their considerations unrealistic and potentially unsafe?

5 Decisions talk

"Taking into consideration everything we've talked about, would you agree we have decided that continuing with **surgery/postponing surgery/not going ahead** with surgery is the safest option for you at the moment?"

If going ahead with planned care.

"In order to keep you as safe as possible before the operation, these are the things that you can do."

- Self-isolation instructions and testing instructions.
- Discuss transport to and from hospital, taking into account the risks.

Clinician thought: What to do, and who to contact, if they or members of their household develop symptoms.

"There are also some things that you can do to help yourself prepare for the operation and recover more quickly."

Clinician thought: Discuss these topics as appropriate.
- Staying active
- Avoiding alcohol
- Stopping smoking
- Eating well
- Bringing in a home supply of medication

If postponing planned care or removing from waiting list.

"As we have decided to postpone your surgery/not go ahead with surgery, let's talk about some options to help you cope with your symptoms."

Prehabilitation: This supports people to prepare for treatment. It promotes healthy behaviours and prescribes exercise, nutrition and psychological support based on a person's needs.

Clinician thought: If you are going ahead or postponing planned care – can you refer this patient for prehabilitation?

6 Final steps

Summarise to the patient

- The overall decision
- Interim treatment agreement
- What you will be doing next
- What you want the patient to do next
- Signpost to further information if required

Clinician thought: Ask patient to summarise their understanding of conversation (teach back if helpful).

Remember

Communicate your consultation discussion and outcomes with the **patient's primary care team.**

Remember to provide any information in a format that is accessible to the patient, e.g. consider providing information in an easy-to-read format.