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Using Shared Decision Making to Build Trust and Improve Communication

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Communication between clinicians and patients is a factor that influences the quality of care for patients with chronic conditions. Patients with diabetes who self-report mistrust in the healthcare system experience substandard communication with clinicians, are less involved in their diabetes care, and have trouble relating to their clinicians.¹ As a result, these patients may be less likely to share health concerns, ask questions about treatment recommendations, and adhere to care plans. Patient mistrust is of particular concern amongst historically underserved and vulnerable populations.²

Seek
Help
Assess
Reach
Evaluate



A critical step in building trust and eliminating disparities in health care is to include patients in the decision making process.³ Patient-centered communication models that emphasize listening and empathy help to build trust, increase engagement, and decrease patient anxiety. Such models result in improved health outcomes and patient well-being.⁴

The SHARE Approach (Seek, Help, Assess, Reach, Evaluate)

The SHARE Approach is a five-step process for shared decision making that includes examining and comparing the benefits and risks of each treatment option through meaningful dialogue about what matters most to the patient. This stepwise approach can improve patient understanding and satisfaction while advancing the decision making process.⁵

Communication Example	Steps
Seek your patient’s participation.	“Having a new diagnosis and making decisions about treatment can be overwhelming. How about we work together to make a plan that works for you?”
Help your patient explore and compare treatment options. Discuss the options and review the financial costs, burdens of treatment, side effects, and benefits.	“Let me tell you what the research says about the benefits and risks of the medicines you are considering.”
Assess your patient’s values and preferences.	“What things are most important to you when deciding which option to take?”
Reach a decision with your patient.	“It is fine to take more time to think about the treatment choices. Would you like some more time, or are you ready to decide?”
Evaluate your patient’s decision, make plans to review the decision in the future.	“Please let me know whether or not you are satisfied with the medication at your follow-up visits.”

For more information, access Cardi-OH’s expanded resource on [shared decision making](#).

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