

Welcome to our workshop. This interactive learning experience has been designed to build medical decision-making competence and confidence for professionals and family members who are responsible for surrogate medical decisions.

By the end of this training, participants will be able to:

- 1. Explain what is expected of you as a surrogate decision-maker by a long list of different sources.
- 2. Use the 6-Box Professional Q&A Tool to thoroughly assess medical situations and options so that you can come to a well-thought-out decision.
- 3. Demonstrate information gathering techniques that build trust and cameraderie while maintianing efficiency.
- 4. Document your process and decisions to show you were thorough, thoughful and in keeping with professioanl standards.

What is the defintion of "Medical Decision?" Is there more than 1 definition?

PART 1: EXPECTATIONS

Who has expectations of you?

Based on your role, there are many different interested parties who have expectations about your work and its results. Consider the importance and impact of a medical decision and it is no surprise that many eyes may be on you.

Client
Family or Friends
Medical and Service Providers
Court
Your State
Your Direct Supervisor
Attorney
National Guardianship Association
Center for Guardianship Certification
National Association of Social Work
Other

What are you expected to know about your client?

Foundational information is typically uncovered and organized by professional guardians. Some folks use software. Others use a document similar to our "Face/Fact Sheet." Ideally, key facts about the adult's life are documented in one place so a guardian can access it easily. Sometimes, this information is filled in gradually over time. So, a guardian may not have all details right away.

However, before making medical decisions, here are the highlights of what a guardian is expected to know:

- ✓ Client name and contact information
- ✓ Medical insurance including identification numbers
- ✓ Code Status (and any facts about authorization to change code status)
- ✓ Medical history including diagnoses, treatments, or current medications
- ✓ Previously stated medical wishes/Advance Directives
- ✓ Medical providers' names and contact information
- ✓ Emergency contacts



Vera is 93, lives in memory care facility, no family



Guardianship Face-Fact Sheet PERSONAL INFORMATION Person's Name VERA VICTOR Phone XXXX **Street Address** XXXX Email XXXXCity, ST Zip XXXX Other Contact Info XXXX Date of Birth 1/12/1931 SSN XXXX Intake date address/contact Insurance Name UXSUP Insurance ID# XXXX Medicaid # Medicare # XXXX Income XXXX Income Source XXXX Education XXXX Military Service ☐ YES X NO **Branch of Service** XXXX **Dates of Service** X Full Code DNR DNI DNH CMO **Code Status** If not Full Code, date of Authority to consent to code change: Notes on Individual's Preferences, Habits and Current Situation Vera has Living Will. She states she does not want machines breathing for her to keep her alive.

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Guardianship Face-Fact Sheet FAMILY + FRIENDS **Marital Status** Never Married □ Married □ Divorced □ Separated X Widowed XXXX XXXX Spouse Name Spouse Phone **Spouse Street Address** XXXX Spouse Email XXXX Spouse City, ST, Zip XXXX Spouse Other Contact Info **Emergency Contact Info** Important Contact Name XXXX Important Contact Phone XXXX Important Contact Street Addr XXXX Important Contact Email XXXX Important Contact City, ST, Zip XXXX Important Contact Other Contact Info LIVING ARRANGEMENTS ☐ Alone ☐ With Family ☐ With Non-Family X In Facility Lives Alone or Not Facility Type X Nursing Home $\ \square$ Rest Home $\ \square$ Assisted Living $\ \square$ Group Home **Facility Name Facility Phone** XXXX VanElegant **Facility Address** 1000 VanElegant Drive **Facility Nurse** Vivian Vann **Nurse Contact Info** XXXX Social Worker Veronica Daski Social Worker Phone XXXX If anyone regularly provides personal care or does chores Additional Notes for the person, provide name and contact info

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Guardianship Face-Fact Sheet

Diagnosis 1	Alzheimer's Dementia	Medication 1	Aricept, 10Mg nighttime
Diagnosis 2	Hypertension	Medication 2	Metroprolol, 75Mg nighttime
Diagnosis 3	Osteoporis	Medication 3	Actonel, 35 Mg weekly dosage
Diagnosis 4		Medications 4	
Medical Diagnosis Notes		The state of the s	s social. 2023, Occassionally very sa r outbursts (she is so calm most of the
PHARMACY			
No. and a second	VVVV	Dhama an Dhama	VVVV
	XXXX	Pharmacy Phone City, ST, Zip	XXXX XXXX
		Pharmacy Phone City, ST, Zip	
Pharmacy Street	XXXX		
Pharmacy Street MEDICAL CONTACTS			
Pharmacy Street MEDICAL CONTACTS PCP Name	XXXX	City, ST, Zip	XXXX
Pharmacy Street MEDICAL CONTACTS PCP Name PCP Street Address	XXXX Dr. Vong	City, ST, Zip PCP Phone	xxxx
Pharmacy Street MEDICAL CONTACTS PCP Name PCP Street Address PCP City, ST, Zip	Dr. Vong XXXX	City, ST, Zip PCP Phone	xxxx
Pharmacy Street MEDICAL CONTACTS PCP Name PCP Street Address PCP City, ST, Zip Specialist 1 Specialty	Dr. Vong XXXX XXXX	City, ST, Zip PCP Phone	xxxx
Pharmacy Street MEDICAL CONTACTS PCP Name PCP Street Address PCP City, ST, Zip Specialist 1 Specialty Specialist Name	Dr. Vong XXXX XXXX Geriatrician	PCP Phone PCP Email	XXXX XXXX XXXX
Pharmacy Name Pharmacy Street MEDICAL CONTACTS PCP Name PCP Street Address PCP City, ST, Zip Specialist 1 Specialty Specialist Name Street Address City, ST, Zip	Dr. Vong XXXX XXXX Geriatrician Dr. Vega	PCP Phone PCP Email Specialist Phone	XXXX XXXX XXXX
Pharmacy Street MEDICAL CONTACTS PCP Name PCP Street Address PCP City, ST, Zip Specialist 1 Specialty Specialist Name Street Address City, ST, Zip Specialist 2 Specialty	Dr. Vong XXXX XXXX Geriatrician Dr. Vega XXXX	PCP Phone PCP Email Specialist Phone Specialist Email	XXXX XXXX XXXX
Pharmacy Street MEDICAL CONTACTS PCP Name PCP Street Address PCP City, ST, Zip Specialist 1 Specialty Specialist Name Street Address	Dr. Vong XXXX XXXX Geriatrician Dr. Vega XXXX	PCP Phone PCP Email Specialist Phone	XXXX XXXX XXXX

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Guardianship Face-Fact Sheet

Is individual employed?	□ YES □ NO	Title/Work Description	
Employer	XXXX	Address	xxxx
Phone	xxxx	Other Employment Info	XXXX

KNOWN HISTORY OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES?

If yes, describe

IS INDIVIDUAL FOLLOWED BY AN AGENCY SUCH AS DDS OR DMH?

If yes, describe

Case Worker	xxxx	Address	XXXX
Phone	XXXX	Email	XXXX

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Are you expected to know any of these medical terms?

	Term	Definition
	COMN	MON TESTS
1.	Basic Metabolic Panel (BMP)	
2.	Biopsy	
3.	Complete Blood Count (CBC)	
4.	High Density Lipoprotein (HDL)	
5.	Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL)	
6.	Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c)	
7.	Liver Function Test (LFT)	
	DIA	GNOSES
8.	Acute	
9.	Edema	
10.	Hypertension	
11.	Malignant	
12.	Neuropathy	
13.	Positive VS Negative Test Results	
	TREA	ATMENTS
14.	Beta Blocker	
15.	Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme (ACE Inhibitor)	
16.	Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs)	
17.	Antipsychotics/neuroleptics/tranquilizers	
18.	Palliative Care	
19.	End of Life Care	



Term	Definition
	DOCUMENTS
20. Do Not Resuscitate Order (DNR)	
21. Do Not Intubate Order (DNI)	
22. Portable Medical Orders (POLST)	
23. Advance Directive	
24. Medical Power of Attorney	
25. Other	
	MEDICAL ETHICS
26. Beneficence	
27. Non-Malevolence	
28. Best Interest	
29. Substituted Judgment	
30. Justice	
31. Informed Consent	
32. Medical Advocacy	
33. Refusal	
34. Other	

For guardians, medical decision-making is important enough for NGA and CGC to have specific written standards for actions and for certification.



NGA Standards of Practice 14 Medical Decision-Making

- I. Promote + Maintain Adult's Health
- II. Take Reasonable Steps to Ensure Health
- III. Person-Centered Decisions
- IV. Maximize Participation of Adult
- V. Include Healthcare POA, Report to Court
- VI. Use Careful Consideration of Facts
- VII. Emergencies Need Careful Consideration Also
- VIII. Seek Second Opinion
- IX. Extraordinary Medical Circumstances Consider Seeking Advice of Ethics Committees
- X. Speak Directly with Treating Physicians Before Authorizing Treatment
- XI. Do Not Authorize Extraordinary Procedures
 Without Prior Authorization From Court
- XII. Ensure Appropriate Palliative Care
- XIII. Inform Family + Friends

Medical Decision-Making
CODE OF CONDUCT
for Guardians

NGA Standards of Practice 15 Decision-Making About Withholding + Withdrawal of Medical Treatment

- I. Presumption In Favor of Continued Treatment
- II. Follow Written Expressed Wishes Unless Current Wishes are in Conflict (Ethics Committee Support)
- III. Gather + Document All Steps of Decision-Making Process

CGC Competency 7 Medical Decision-Making

(14% of certification exam)

- 7.2 End-of-Life Care
- 7.3 Special Medical Decisions/Conditions
- 7.4 Medical Advocacy
- 7.5 DNR/Withhold/Withdraw
- 7.6 Power of Attorney for Healthcare

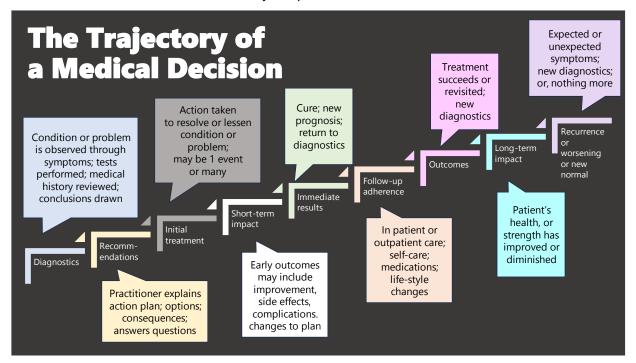
Medical Decision-Making EXPERTISE for Certification



How do these standards and competencies apply to Vera?

Medical decisions rarely involve just a single decision or a single outcome.

This illustration reminds us of the many small steps and the results from each small step. We call this "the trajectory" but it is rarely so straightforward. Guardians must pay close attention to the information being revealed along the way. As we saw in Vera's story, her outcome was not what she had hoped for. Vera's outcome created a new medical decision trajectory.



All medical decisions have outcomes.

Outcomes are not endings.

- 1. Outcomes reveal whether we should stay on the path or change direction.
- 2. They are heavily influenced by adherence, side effects and adverse events.
- 3. While the adult is alive, there are more decisions to be made, typically.
- 4. Documentation of decisions, outcomes, new information, next decisions, etc. show that a guardian has been diligent and thorough.

PART 1: EXPECTATIONS Review

- 1. Have organized, detailed client data including medical history, medications, and providers.
- 2. Know basic medical terms.
- 3. Know and apply guardianship professional standards.
- 4. Be aware of the trajectory of an illness and prepared to make follow-up decisions.



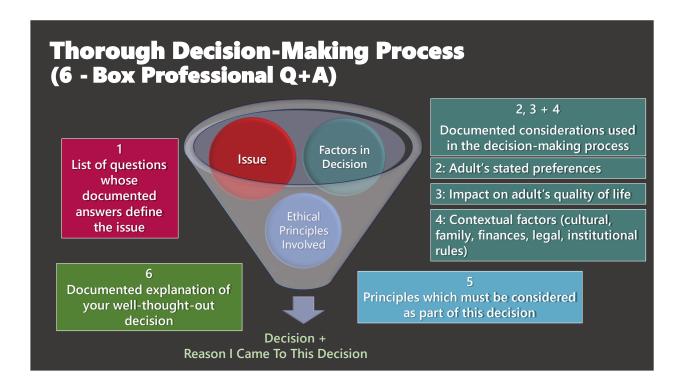
PART 2: 6-BOX Q&A TOOL

Excel spreadsheet you can download at our Learning Hub.

Keeping track of medical information and everything that happens along the trajectory requires an organization system. You may have software or methods that you feel confident using.

In this training, we share a tool that can be completed using a pdf version or an excel version. We offer both versions as downloads to you.

It has been used over the years for a wide range of decisions. Here, we focus on using it for medical decisions.



- 1: Ask yourself this list of questions and fill in the answers to help define the issue or medical problem. This is the information you learned from Doctors and from the client's symptoms or situation.
- 2: Ask yourself these questions to fill in what you know about the client's values or preferences.
- 3: Consider the life the person has been content to live or aspires to live and answer these questions to determine how the options for treatments can have an impact.
- 4: Add in what you know about factors in the client's world that should be considered because they will impact the person's willingness to be treated, the trajectory of the illness or the outcome.
- 5: Layer in the professional standards and medical ethics that you believe must be considered as part of this decision.
- 6: The result of completing steps 1-5 should include informed consent or refusal. Plus, you will have the decision-making process needed to thoroughly report (or justify) the decisions you made.



2024 6 Box Professional Q + A for Ethical Decision-Making.xlsx

1: The Issue		
Questions used to thoroughly understand the issue.	Answers to each question.	
What is the concern?		
What is the history of the issue?		
Is this problem acute? Chronic? Critical? Emergent?		
What interventions or solutions are being considered?		
Who, what, and where do the solution recommendations come from?		
What are the risks of this solutions at this time?		
What are the benefits?		
What are the risks of not taking action?		
Other points or ideas that help to understand the issue.		
For Medical Concerns: 2nd Opinion Provider, Assessment + Recommendation		
For Medical Concerns: 3rd Opinion Provider, Assessment + Recommendation		

2: The Adult's Preferences			
Questions used to identify preferences related to the issue.	Answers to each question.		
Has the adult expressed preferences about this issue?			
What is the adult's preference?			
What is the adult's level of understanding of the issue?			
In discussion of risks, benefits and consequences, what does the adult say?			
Are there any conflicts with "Bill of Rights?"			

3: Quality of Life

Question used to determine if/how adults QOL will be impacted.

How does the adult rate their current quality of life?

What are the adult's quality of life goals?

How will the proposed interventions impact quality of life or goals?

How will not taking action impact quality of life?

4: Contextual Factors		
Uncover cultural, family, finances, legal, institutional rules.	Answers to each question.	
How might family issues impact the decision?		
What institutional issues or rules might influence the decision?		
Are there financial or economic factors?		
Are there religious or cultural factors?		
Are there legal issues that support or oppose this decision?		
What liabilities or consequences might the guardian face as a result of this issue?		
Are there any special circumstances to document?		

In today's training we focus on a subset of these ethical principles focused on medical decisions. This tool includes a list of 21 for you to use when making medical and non-medical decisions.

5: Ethical Principles Associated with this Issue				
Which ones are considerations in this decision?	Questions	Your Answers		
1. Preserve adult's dignity	How does this issue impact the adult's dignity and will the proposed solution be better or worse?			
2. Create safe, secure environment	Is there a change in environment? If so, how do I know it is safe and secure?			
3. Understand needs, values + goals	Have I explored the issue well enough to understand the adult's needs, values or goals?			
4. Support growth and achievement of goals	Does this issue impact growth and goal achievement? If so, how?			
5. Select least restrictive alternatives	Does the principle of least restrictive alternatives apply? If so, how?			
6. Maximize independence	Is the adult's independence impacted? If so, how?			
7. Comply with laws + court order	Are there any laws to be considered as part of this decision? If so, what?			
8. Seek termination or limitation of guardianship, if capacity regained	Are limitations or termination of the guardianship relevant actions to be considered as part of this issue?			
9. Beneficence	How am I demonstrating beneficence?			
10. Non-Malevolence	How am I demonstrating non-malevolence?			
11. Best Interest	Does this decision call for the principle of best interest? Why?			
12. Substituted judgment	Does this decision call for the principle of substituted judgment? Why?			
13. Informed consent	Do I understand the risks and benefits of this decision thoroughly enough to give consent or non-consent?			
14. Justice	Are there issues regarding scarce medical resources?			
15. Detailed accounting	Is money involved? If so, how will I track it?			

5: Ethical Principles Associated with this Issue				
16. No commingling of funds	Is money involved? If so, am I taking care to keep a separate account and accounting?			
17. No financial benefit to conservator	Is there a conflict of interest (or the appearance of COI) in any way?			
18. No estate planning nor asset sales without court approval	Are estate planning or asset sales required for this decision? If so, do I have the authority?			
19. Involve adult in decisions	Am I able to involve the adult in this decision? If not, why?			
20. Strict confidentiality	Does confidentiality need to be broken in order to provide a solution? If so, why?			
21. Documented support for every decision	Do I have the information I need to thoroughly document my decision?			

6: Summary of Information, Conclusions, Decisions	
What do we know as result of this decision-making process?	Answers to each question.
Is action needed?	
What action should be taken?	
Why?	
When?	
Is the adult's preference being respected? If not, why?	
Which ethical principles have been considered?	
What concerns or consequences must be prepared for?	
Are there any conflicts with "Bill of Rights?"	



Small Group Activity: Case Story Dossiers for Wynona, Xavier, Yvonne and Zeke

- Pick 1 person from your group to write notes. This person will present your work to the rest of the class.
- Read your assigned Case Story Dossier & answer questions 1-6.
- Be prepared to explain your plan for getting to a decision by reviewing the questions in each section of the 6-Step Tool + the questions below:
 - 1. What is the current medical issue? If you do not have all the facts, what steps will you take to get the missing information?
 - 2. What are the client's stated preferences? If you do not know preferences, what steps will you take to get the missing information?
 - 3. What is the impact on quality of life? If you do not have all the facts, what steps will you take to get the missing information?
 - 4. Are there contextual factors described in the story? If not, what should a guardian do to find out about contextual factors?
 - 5. Which ethical principles (NGA standards) should be considered as part of this decision?
 - 6. Based on what you know so far, are you prepared to make a decision and document it?

PART 2: 6-BOX Q & A TOOL Review

- 1. Understand the issue by drilling down to fully grasp the situation, recommendations, trajectory, and possible outcomes.
- 2. Include the client's views, past decisions, and cultural norms to determine if they support physician recommendations or if they point to a different course of action.
- 3. Be conversant enough with medical ethics so you can point to the ethical standards you used in your decision-making process.
- 4. Describe your decision clearly and confidently.

PART 3: INFORMATION GATHERING

In Part 2, we talked about questions you ask to understand a medical situation, the options and possible outcomes. In Part 3, we look at skills for finding that information.

Guardians who master the art of rapid information gathering are able to make informed decisions about complex topics.

What makes information gathering tricky?	Solution Ideas
Finding Resources. You are not expected to be the expert. Instead, you must connect with the right people with the needed expertise. What do you do when you do not know where to find a capable resource?	 Hospitals employ Social Workers who can guide you to an expert able to answer in-depth questions about a diagnosis, prognosis, and treatments. Care Managers from local agencies know local experts and can direct you to someone. The internet has no shortage of articles and blogs with details that mirror your client's situation. Learn about medications, side effects, alternate treatments, etc. Notice the author of a well-written post and reach out with questions.
Urgency. Emergent issues require quick decisions. You may not have time to wait for an expert to return your phone call or respond to an email. If it is not in your nature to be aggressive or demanding, then this is the time to learn some powerful key phrases and build your skills as a medical advocate. How can you pursue urgent answers without risking or damaging relationships with busy experts?	 Walk right in to an office with head held high and a notepad with the facts of the case. Have a prepared simple statement that expresses the urgency. "I am sorry to barge in on you. I have an ill client whose Doctors are demanding an urgent decision. You are the recommended expert and I am hoping we can talk for 5 minutes. Can you please consult with me quickly?" If you must email someone, make sure you send along a short summary of the case and the deadline. This is better than emailing your questions. Summaries might look like this, "I am guardian for a 50-year-old man with Parasitic Meningitis. I am told you are an expert and I have just a few questions I must get answered before I can consent to one of the recommended treatments. Doctors tell me the situation is urgent. Is it all possible for you to talk with me in person or by phone in the next 24 hours? I appreciate any time you can give me and will be available at your convenience. Thank you for considering my request."

What makes information gathering tricky?

Unproductive Communication. Medical discussions can be emotional. We ask personal questions about life-threatening or life-changing topics and someone responds with fear or resentment instead of useful information. We can appear to be questioning someone's judgment or recommendation and that person chooses to ignore our questions or give partial answers.

What can we do to preserve the dignity, trust and time of the person we are trying to get information from?

Solution Ideas

- 1. Preserve your contact's dignity by saying "please" when you ask a question, "thank you" when given time or information, and "you're welcome" in response to anything they thank you for. Believe it or not, good manners are understood and appreciated by people of all ages and cultures. Be mannerly and respectful in person, by phone and in emails. "May I please ask you a few questions about your mother's symptoms?"
- Use the statement/question pair method to guide a conversation. Take your list of questions and place an explanation or remark before each one.
 Explain,

"I've been a guardian for 10 years but have never faced this medical issue. I am hoping to learn from your experience with the disease. Can you please tell me about the newest treatments?"

Remark.

"That's very interesting. No one has shared that viewpoint before. What else can you tell me about how that felt?"

- 3. Listen closely to each answer you get. Don't be thinking about your next question. When the person finishes answering, show you were paying attention and that you were interested. The best way to show interest is by commenting on what was said and then encouraging the person to tell a bit more. The remark above is a good example.
- 4. Don't let someone's sarcastic or hostile responses stop you. Encourage trust by saying, "I can see that my last question was (annoying, offputting, dumb...). I hope you will stay with me. You are the only person whose insights are important right now. My goal is to do the right thing for my client. Can you please help me by telling me more about...?"
- 5. If you do not get the information you were looking for, take responsibility for it. Avoid saying "That's not what I was asking." Instead, say, "This is not my expertise so I may not have asked the right question. Let me try again." Then ask for the information using different words.

Questioning Mistakes That Can Waste Time and Resources

- 1. Avoid asking personal questions in front of others.
- 2. Do not ask more than 1 question at a time (unless you are typing into an email or medical portal).
- 3. Never show impatience or annoyance.
- 4. Control the impulse to interrupt even if the person has taken off on a tangent.
- 5. Pointing out contradictions may cause the person to defend wrong information instead of clarifying.
- 6. Misleading a resource about the quantity or intensity of your questions may lose the resource permanently.
- 7. If a provider prefers you send questions through a medical portal, do not insist on in-person meetings without trying their preferred method first.
- 8. Forgetting to say "please," "thank you," and "you're welcome" may reduce cooperation.

Medical Information Gathering Activity

Situations 1 + 2	Your Ideas
You would like a 3rd opinion from Dr. Welk, a senior physician who happens to be consulting at the hospital today. You heard she has an international reputation.	
 How would you prepare before approaching her? 	
2. What would you say to her?	
Your client's brother is visiting him for 2 weeks. You would like to understand the brother's observations about your client's health as it compares to the last time they were together.	
 How would you prepare before approaching him? 	
2. What would you say to him?	



PART 3: INFORMATION GATHERING Review

- 1. Medical advocacy requires diligent, vigilant and highly assertive investigation.
- 1. Prepare for your conversations by organizing facts to share and questions to ask.
- 2. If your first attempt at getting answers results in resistance or useless information, try another way.
- 3. Do not underestimate the power of courtesy and repetition.
- 4. Do not give up.

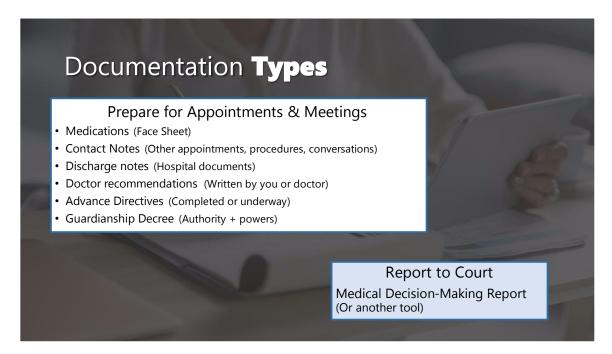
PART 4: POWERFUL DOCUMENTATION

Throughout this training we have explored ways to track our work. You now have a list of new downloadable documentation tools to add to the ones you already use.

In this section, we wrap up by sharing one more tool, and a few important messages.

What makes documentation powerful?

- 1. Meets state requirements.
- 2. Easily read and understood by any reader.
- 3. Find it when asked.



This excel file can be downloaded and used as is or edited.

Medical Decision-Making Report

Questions	Answers
DECISION COMMUNICATED	□ Phone □ In Person □ In Writing □ Other Day, Date, Time
DECISION CONTINIONICATED	Who received decision communication? (Name, Title, Contact Info)
	who received decision communications (Name, ritie, contact injo)
MEDICAL DECISION DESCRIPTION	Consent or refusal for
Wilder of the property of the	Consent of Ferdulation
CONTACT INFO	
Client	
Treating Physician/Group	
1st Opinion Name + Specialty	
2nd Opinion Name + Specialty	
3rd Opinion Name + Specialty	
DIAGNOSIS/TREATMENT INFO	
Medical Condition/Diagnosis	
Recommended Treatment Description	
Urgency of Treatment	□ Emergency □ 6 Months □ More than 1 Year
Hospital Stay	□ Inpatient □ Outpatient
Anesthesia	□ Yes, what? □ No
Recovery from Treatment	□ Difficult □ Rehab □ Brief □ Lengthy
Risks + Losses Due to Treatment	
Benefits + Positive Outcomes	
Alternative Treatments	
Conflicting Medicines	
PATIENT OPINIONS	
Patient Has Been Informed	
Patient Willingness/Feedback	
Patient Conflicting Values or Issues	□ Physical □ Social □ Moral/Religious
CONSENT	□ Yes, what? □ No
Treatment or alternative scheduled	□ Yes, what? □ No
NOTES	

PART 4: POWERFUL DOCUMENTATION Review

- 1. Prove you have been thorough.
- 2. Explain how your decisions were made.
- 3. Show off your organization system and control of the guardianship to the court or anyone who needs to know about your work.
- 4. Print copies and keep them.





Please take a few minutes to think about the most important skills or actions you learned or re-learned today. Then, document them so you can remember to work on them. This is the best way to begin turning training into mastery.