

Choosing Wisely Wales

Choosing Wisely Wales is a movement to encourage open conversations between patients and their clinicians to make decisions together about the right care for the patient – informed by good evidence and responsive to the needs and wishes of the patient.

Changing clinical conversations

Many tests will determine the cause of problems and suggest a plan of treatment. Many treatments make life better.

Clinicians have long and detailed training and are tested and monitored. Most clinicians build up good experience in how to apply their knowledge and experience for the benefit of patients.

However, tests and treatments may sometimes do more harm than good – potentially leading to uncertainty and worry, or detrimental side effects.

Choosing Wisely Wales will help patients and their clinicians to choose together the right care for each patient.

Support will be given to patients to help them make decisions about their care, avoiding tests and treatments which are unlikely to benefit them. Reliable accessible information will also be provided or signposted to support open and honest clinical conversations, helping clinicians and patients to apply that information to local and personal circumstances.

Aims of the programme

- Embed a broad culture change in healthcare where clinicians and patients regularly discuss the value of treatments and make shared decisions.
- Ensure reliable and valid information is available for patients and clinicians regarding agreed interventions of low value, i.e. where there is a low chance of a beneficial outcome.
- Enable participating professional health organisations such as the health professional colleges and societies, to produce with patients lists of commonly used treatments/interventions whose necessity should be questioned.
- Encourage local clinical teams to use shared decision making skills in consultations and adopt/select locally relevant interventions of low value to concentrate on when applying shared decision making.
- Reduce harm to patients caused by inappropriate use of tests or interventions.

Informing and rebalancing decision making

Some of the changes that are being encouraged by the programme focus on decision making along the patient pathway:

- Clinicians should find out the concerns and relevant beliefs of the patient, as well as listen to their story. Patients should state honestly how they feel and what their concerns are.
- Trusted and reliable information should be available that is helpful to both clinicians and patients in the most appropriate format.
- Clinicians and patients should consider all relevant options together.
- Personalise the decision. This should be based on evidence, the patient's needs and wishes, address all concerns as far as possible and may need to be adapted to local or personal circumstances.
- Decide together: Clinicians and patients must take an equal as possible part in decision making.

Continued on overleaf

What might we do less of?

Professional associations have been asked to liaise with patient groups to produce a list of interventions of low benefit, which are commonly used. These will act as examples to try out and gain expertise in shared decision making.

The choice of interventions by Choosing Wisely Wales is being guided by the following principles:

- Each recommendation must involve a decision within the scope of the professional association's members.
- Intervention should be used frequently and have significant impact on patients and/or the NHS.
- There should be generally accepted evidence to support the recommendation.
- The process should involve and be supported by patients, be well documented and publicly available on request.
- Effects should be measurable so we can assess if we are making a difference.
- Controversial areas, where there is uncertainty or lack of agreement, should be avoided.

Alongside the expected benefits to patients, as they are provided with clearer information and greater input as to the tests and treatments that are best suited to them, it is hoped that clinicians, too, will experience benefits that come from shared decision making – more rewarding consultations, enhanced relationships with patients, wider knowledge and awareness of available tests and treatments, and a greater feeling of job satisfaction.

Choosing Wisely Wales is a clinician led movement in partnership with patients and public health. We are looking for local champions from all disciplines.



Four questions for patients to ask

Choosing Wisely Wales suggests a patient asks four questions when considering tests or treatments:

- What are my options?
- What are the benefits and harms?
- Do I really need this?
- What can I do myself?

Similarly, clinicians are encouraged to use the following to guide their opening questions to their patients:

- "What matters to you?" rather than "what is the matter with you?"
- "How can we decide together how to improve things?" rather than "how can I help you?"



Further Information



www.choosingwisely.wales.nhs.uk



Paul.myres@wales.nhs.uk



Choosing Wisely
Wales



@ChoosingWiselyW



*Dr Paul Myres,
Programme Lead,
Choosing Wisely Wales*