

# SUPPORTING SHARED DECISION MAKING IN CARE HOMES



Shared decision making is an inclusive process where a person works alongside another individual or individuals to reach a decision. People living in care homes have the right to be included in decisions. This includes decisions about their care, as well as everyday 'care-free' decisions.

Shared decision making should also include other people working in and connected to care homes, including team members and other employees, visitors including unpaid carers and other colleagues within health and social care.

## Kippers for breakfast

Rod has always loved eating kippers for breakfast. He lives in a care home and recently has started to have more difficulty swallowing. Staff were concerned about Rod's safety and his risk of choking if he continued to eat kippers, as well as any potential repercussions for them if he did choke. However, they also recognised that eating kippers was positive for Rod's quality of life.



Zoe, manager at the home, arranged an urgent capacity assessment through the DoLS team as Rod's current care plan did not correspond to his capacity. Zoe also did a risk assessment with Rod and had a chat with him about the risks associated with eating kippers. Rod confirmed that he understood that eating kippers may cause him to choke, but said he wanted to continue eating them. Zoe made a note of Rod's wishes in his care plan, reassured staff that supporting his decision was the right thing to do and asked them to be aware of the situation at breakfast. Everyone working in the home respects Rod's decision. All monthly reviews are signed off by him and he continues to eat kippers for breakfast.

## Positive practice thoughts



- Other perspectives and 'unwise decisions': Have we considered other perspectives, especially regarding a decision we personally would make differently or a decision we might think is 'unwise'?
- A culture of positive risk taking: What are you doing to understand staff experiences, including their fears and worries, in shared decision making scenarios? How do you celebrate the role of team members in enabling people to live full and meaningful lives?
- Trusted individuals: If a relative or other close individual speaks highly of someone who works in the home, have you involved this staff member in decisions? This person has gained the relative's trust and may provide support during decision making.

Want to see more tips, information and practice examples? Read our full guide to shared decision making. **SCAN THE CODE OR VISIT:** [myhomelife.org.uk/shared-decision-making-guide](https://www.myhomelife.org.uk/shared-decision-making-guide)

