



Adaptive Strategies for Self-Assessment and Decision-Making

NHCHC Health Management Toolkit

2025

Adaptive strategies focus on minimizing or mitigating barriers to health management by changing the environment, components of an activity, or providing tools/devices to compensate for areas of difficulty, impairments, or lack of skills.

- Adaptive strategies are useful to help a person quickly be able to manage a task or decrease risk and safety concerns.
- Adaptive strategies can be used immediately and in combination with skill building (which may take more time to have an impact).

Self-assessment is the ability to identify one's own capacity to complete a specific activity or action based on existing knowledge and physical skills, and to assess one's own internal or physical status.

This includes self-efficacy, which is an individual's belief in their capability to produce particular outcomes. Self-efficacy is a basis for an individual deciding what course of action to take, and the degree of effort to exert, when faced with an obstacle or challenge in life.

Decision making is the cognitive, reasoning-based process resulting in the selection of a belief or a course of action among several possible alternative options, based on assumptions of values, preferences, and beliefs of the decision-maker.

Adaptive strategies for self-assessment and decision-making focus on modifying health education, providing additional resources to support health management activities and decisions, and identifying additional community-based supports.

Providers can first [assess a person's self-assessment and decision-making skills](#) to determine what adaptations may be most effective and useful to the client.

Adaptations to Support Self-Assessment and Decision Making

Provide education to clients on what symptoms would warrant calling 911 or going to the emergency department given their clinical situation.

- Provide small handouts to help prompt the client if in crisis or experiencing more acute symptoms.

Provide education and resources so clients know how to access emergency care if needed.

- Provide small hand-outs with emergency information (911, preferred hospital information, local crisis lines).

Provide education and resources so clients know how to contact their health team if needed.

- Provide small cards or handouts with call-line numbers or direct ways to get in touch with providers as needed.

Provide decision-making support if needed.

Support referrals for second opinions if desired.

Provide education or adapt patient information to health literacy levels (including from external providers) to help patients understand information and make informed decisions.

For more tools and strategies, please see the full Health Management Toolkit available from <https://nhchc.org/resource/health-management-toolkit>

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