



Supported Decision Making & Guardianship

Charting the Cs
Conference 2025:

*To Literacy and
Beyond*

Cooperation
Communication
Collaboration

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What is Supported Decision Making?

Assistance from one or more persons of an individual's choosing in understanding the nature and consequences of potential personal and financial decisions which enables the individual to make the decisions and, when consistent with the individual's wishes, in communicating a decision once made.

MN Statute 524.5-102, Subd. 16a

Supported Decision Making

- No one is completely independent
- How we all make challenging decisions:
 - Turn to trusted others or experts
 - Gather information needed to make decision
- People who have agency / self-determination have better outcomes

Principles of Supported Decision Making

- People who get to make decisions about their lives are happier, healthier, more likely to live in community settings, and have jobs
- *Everyone* needs help sometimes
- No one is completely independent.
- How we ALL make decisions:
 - Gather more information
 - Talk to trusted others

Guardianship Might Be Needed

- Person can't or won't cooperate with others to get their needs met or help them make decisions (and we can't overcome this resistance)
- Person can't appoint someone to help with decision making (Health Care Agent)
- Person can't sign a Release of Information to allow others to gather information and talk to providers
- Rep Payee and Authorized Rep insufficient to meet needs

Is Guardianship All Bad? Should We Abolish It?

- No! Guardianship is a valuable, effective, and necessary tool. When it's needed.
- Guardianship is the best tool when:
 - need for protection and substitute decision making outweighs possible harms and unintended consequences
 - powers of guardianship will effectively address the problem
 - act of removing rights for the person's own good won't worsen the situation
 - situation is so dire and there is no other way to address the person's unmet needs or maltreatment or safety concerns
 - all less restrictive options have been eliminated

Center for Excellence in Supported Decision Making



- Assessments
- In-depth, personalized consultations for individuals, families, communities, professionals
- Technical Assistance, trainings, education sessions

Guardianship Information Line

- 952-945-4174 1-844-333-1748 (toll free)
- cesdm@voamn.org

Attribution & Gratitude

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Thank you!

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