Handout: Problem solving and decision making

Problem-solving

People with LTCs will often have problems that can stop them completing actions plans and achieving their goals. People can find it hard to deal with problems on their own and might ask you to help them solve a problem.

Sometimes problems cannot be solved, and you might need to talk to the person you are working with about that.

Problem solving

A step-by-step process

- Sometimes problems can stop you completing your action plans and achieving your goal.
- It can be hard to deal with problems on your own.

Here is the step-by-step problem solving process you can go through with a friend or family member. This will give you some ideas about how to solve the problems that are holding you back.

- Identify and define the problem
- List ideas and possible solutions
- Rate each idea
- Choose one
- Put into action
- Review, if it doesn't work, try another idea

Here are the steps:

1. Identify and define the problem
   - I know I need to stop smoking but I’m not sure if I can do it.
   - How could you fix the problem? (Whānau or friends could help you with this).

2. List ideas and possible solutions
   - Call Quitline
   - Go to a Quitline meeting
   - Call friends and whānau when I went a meal
   - Note each idea
     - Prop/Win
     - Core/Against
     - I know I need support and being able to relate to others will be comforting and help me to believe in myself.
     - I could get overwhelmed and have trouble speaking in front of the group.
   - What are the good things about each idea? What are the things that could stop you putting your idea into action?

3. Choose one idea
   - Call Quitline
   - Put into action
     - Call my doctor and mother and ask if they can support me next Saturday when I call Quitline.
   - Review
     - Flanks call went well. Quitline staff offered me the use of handy talks and arranged a one on one meeting with my doctor to help me quit smoking.

For more copies, visit www.hn.org.nz/takecharge
My problem solving process

1. Identify and define the problem

2. List ideas and possible solutions

3. Rate each idea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idea</th>
<th>Pros/For</th>
<th>Cons/Against</th>
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4. Choose one idea

5. Put into action

6. Review

Show this to your healthcare team!

Learn more at www.hn.org.nz – Search for problem solving and making changes.
Decision-making

People with LTCs have to make decisions all the time about their health. And often they are making those decisions at a time when they are not feeling very well. You can help them make a decision using steps that are similar to the problem-solving steps.

- Step 1. Work out the different options.
- Step 2. Write down the pros (good things about the option) and cons (not so good things about the option).
- Step 3. Score each pro and con from 1 (not important to the person) to 5 (very important to the person).
- Step 4. Add up all the scores for the pros and cons to find which side has the highest score.
- Step 5. Before the person goes ahead with the side with the highest score, ask the person does it feel right for them. If the person says yes, then they should go with that decision.

Example

One of the people you are working with currently has fish and chips every Thursday night for dinner. You have been encouraging him to eat more healthy food and he is trying to decide if he could have fish and chips once a fortnight instead of every week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision - Should I start eating fish and chips once a fortnight instead of once a week?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pros</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>It is much healthier</td>
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<td>It will help with my cholesterol</td>
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<tr>
<td>It will help with my diabetes</td>
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<tr>
<td>It will help me lose weight</td>
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<tr>
<td>It will save some money</td>
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<tr>
<td>It will be better for the whānau</td>
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Based on this, the decision would be to have fish and chips once a fortnight. Remember to check with the person that the decision feels right for them and they are confident to make this change.

**Decision**

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