

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 a 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.

Here are the steps:

1
Identify & define

2
List ideas and possible solutions

3
Rate each idea

4
Choose one

5
Put into action

6
Review. If it doesn't work, try another idea

1 Identify and define the problem
 I know I need to stop smoking but I'm not sure if I can do it.

2 List ideas and possible solutions
 1. Call Quitline
 2. Go to a Quitline meeting
 3. Call friends and whānau when I want a smoke

Idea	Pros/For	Cons/Against
1	Best advice.	I might be nervous about talking to new people.
2	Knowing I have 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.
3	I can tailor the action plan to suit myself. Friends and whānau can help me if I need it.	Maybe I should make my action plan with help from Quitline instead. They know more than I do about stopping smoking.

4 Choose one idea
 Call Quitline

5 Put into action
 Call my sister and mother and ask if they can support me next Saturday when I call Quitline.

6 Review
 Phone call went well. Quitline staff offered me lots of handy tools and arranged a one on one meeting with my doctor to help me quit smoking.

What is the problem?
 How would you explain it?

How could you fix the problem? (whānau or friends could help you with this).

What are the good things about each idea? What are the things that could stop you putting your idea into action?

What is the best idea? (whānau or friends could help you with this).

What do you need to do to fix the problem?

Did your idea work?
 What went well?
 What didn't? How could you learn from this?
 What can you try next?

For more copies, visit www.hn.org.nz/takecharge

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.

Decision - Should I start eating fish and chips once a fortnight instead of once a week?			
Pros	Score	Cons	Score
It is much healthier	3	I will miss it	4
It will help with my cholesterol	3	I will have to cook something else for dinner	3
It will help with my diabetes	4	The fish is good for me	2
It will help me lose weight	2	It is quick	4
It will save some money	1		
It will be better for the whānau	3		
Total	16	Total	13

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.....

Pros	Score	Cons	Score
Total		Total	