

Informed Decisions Toolbox

Decision-makers do not currently use the best available information from management and health services research. Numerous barriers to managers' use of evidence in decision making exist, including time pressures, perceived threats to autonomy, preference for colloquial knowledge based on individual experiences, difficulty accessing the relevant evidence base, reliance on external consultants (and others) to determine the quality of the information, and lack of resources. The Informed Decisions Toolbox helps managers overcome these barriers.

The Toolbox describes six steps for managers and policy-makers to consider when gathering and evaluating evidence to make a well-informed decision (see table below). The ID Toolbox does not attempt to make a decision or determine the right decision for a manager or policy-maker.

Six Steps for Managers to Consider When Making a Well-informed Decision

<p>Step 1: Framing the Question Behind the Decision What is the decision and what do I really need to know to make a well-informed decision?</p>	
<p>Step 2: Finding Sources of Information Have I (or my staff/consultant) looked in all the right places for evidence?</p>	
<p>Step 3: Assessing the Accuracy of Information How much of this information is accurate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the information valid and reliable? • Is the information comprehensive? • Am I missing important perspectives or aspects of my decision? 	EVALUATING THE EVIDENCE
<p>Step 4: Assessing the Applicability of Information Is all of the information applicable for my decision and my organization?</p>	
<p>Step 5: Assessing the Actionability of Information Is this information adequate for creating an actual plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which recommendations can I implement? • Which findings can I convert into concrete steps for implementation? • Which information provides guidelines about the possible effects of my decision? • What are the expected effects of my decision? • What are the possible unintended effects of my decision? 	
<p>Step 6: Determining If the Information Is Adequate When do I have enough information to make my decision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a single best option? • Is there more than one reasonable option? • What should I do if the information I need does not exist yet? 	