



Implementation and Fidelity Manual

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I. Overview of the DECIDE™ Self-Management Program

A. Overview

The DECIDE™ Self-Management program is an evidence-based program with a structured curriculum. DECIDE has been shown to improve clinical and behavioral outcomes in people with a range of chronic disease conditions.

The goal of DECIDE is to help people learn how to change their behavior so they can better manage their chronic condition (e.g., diabetes, high blood pressure, heart failure, kidney disease).

The DECIDE program facilitates self-care and maintenance by teaching people with a chronic condition problem solving as a key skill for behavior change by incorporating 7 core self-management behaviors:

1. Healthy eating
2. Being active
3. Taking medicine as prescribed
4. Monitoring your clinical numbers, activity, and eating habits
5. Reducing risks to lower the chances of complications
6. Healthy coping with chronic disease and emotional well-being
7. Problem solving to find solutions and take action

Problem solving is a skill that helps participants *apply* health-related knowledge and education to the context of their everyday lives, thus translating knowledge into actual behavior change. As such, basic health- or disease-related knowledge/education is considered an important prerequisite for problem solving in the context of managing health.

The first DECIDE session, “*All the Facts*,” addresses the need for a review and update of basic chronic disease self-management behaviors and clinical targets. Prior to engaging in this intervention, however, participants should already have training in procedures for self-monitoring (blood sugar, blood pressure) and taking their medication as prescribed.

The program reinforces current national standards of care and clinical practice guidelines for chronic disease management. Sessions make use of instruction/didactic methods, group discussion, coaching, modeling, and rehearsal. In addition, positive reinforcement comes from the facilitator and other group members, as well as from effective implementation of the problem-solving skills training in real life.

B. Versions and Adaptations

DECIDE was originally developed for people with diabetes, but it has been adapted to support multiple chronic disease populations. DECIDE is flexible because the core elements of the program – chronic disease self-management education and problem-solving training – can be applied to address many chronic disease conditions. DECIDE is available for the following disease conditions:

- Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease (English and Spanish)
- High Blood Pressure (English and Spanish)
- Chronic Kidney Disease (English only)
- Heart Failure (English only)

C. Program Material Accessibility and Usability

Accessibility of health information. The presentation and format of DECIDE program materials address the accessibility of health information, with the following considerations:

- ***Literacy and health literacy.*** DECIDE meets the Plain Language Act of 2010 requirements for readability. Program materials were written using plain language in both English and Spanish, and they are literacy adapted to be readable at a less than 5th grade reading level. Previous research has demonstrated that DECIDE is usable among persons with very low literacy, while also maintaining high satisfaction among individuals with average and high literacy (Hill-Briggs et al., 2008).
- ***Functional impairment and disability*** affecting receipt of information (e.g., vision impairment/blindness, hearing impairment, cognitive impairment). The format, presentation of information, and graphic design elements of DECIDE program materials were designed to enhance the accessibility of the program for those with functional impairment. Research has shown that DECIDE is usable among people with a range of functional impairments (Hill-Briggs et al., 2008).

Usability of health information. The content of the health information was designed to be usable among high-risk populations, taking into consideration the following factors:

- Environment and resources
- Cultural relevance and meaningfulness
- Suitability of recommendations for persons with functional impairment and disability

D. DECIDE Curriculum

DECIDE is a structured curriculum that is offered in both English and Spanish. It consists of 9 modules – 1 *All the Facts* educational module, followed by 8 Problem-Solving Training modules. The *All the Facts* educational module includes approximately 90 minutes of content, and the 8 Problem-Solving Training modules include 30 - 60

minutes of content. Facilitators can schedule extra time for discussion, which depends on the needs and size of the group. For example, a facilitator may schedule 2 hours for the All the Facts educational module, including 90 minutes for content and 30 minutes for discussion.

Participants receive a workbook that contains the *All the Facts* and *Problem-Solving Training* materials, which provide instructional information, in-session skill-building exercises, and home skill-building exercises related to the sessions.

The DECIDE 9-module curriculum begins with the ***All the Facts*** education module and accompanying participant workbook. This module is focused on disease risks and risk management in persons with a chronic condition (e.g., diabetes, high blood pressure, heart failure, kidney disease).

DECIDE Education Module	
Module 1: All the Facts: Your What to Know Workbook	Provides a review of basic health information needed to understand recommended chronic disease self-management behaviors and targets. It may be viewed as a “booster education” module to ensure all participants have a common, minimal base of knowledge of disease self-management. Educational content is from current guidelines and standards of care, including the American Diabetes Association (ADA) Standards of Care and American Heart Association (AHA) recommendations. This content is updated, as needed, with changes in practice recommendations or care standards.

The education module is followed by 8 problem-solving training modules and an accompanying participant workbook: ***Hitting the Targets: Your Problem-Solving Workbook***. The problem-solving content is modified from the D’Zurilla and Nezu (1998, 2007) social-problem solving therapy and adapted to the context of chronic disease self-management (Hill-Briggs, 2003). The following eight modules comprise this workbook.

DECIDE Problem Solving Training Modules	
Module 2: Overview of Problem Solving	Provides a rationale for problem-solving as a self-management skill, an orientation to the problem-solving process, and an overview of the steps participants will learn about as they complete the problem-solving training. In this initial session, participants compare their HbA1c, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels to target levels and begin to formulate self-management as directed toward improving their disease control.
Module 3: Taking Control of Stress and Emotions	Participants learn about identification of negative and positive emotions around good self-management.

Module 4: What Makes a Problem a Problem?	Participants identify and keep track of problems that inhibited best care of their health.
Module 5: Set Goals that Fit Your Life and Know Your Options	Participants to refer back to the problems identified in Module 4 and formulate goals for change.
Module 6: Different Ways to Reach Health Goals: Choosing the Path Forward	Focuses on evaluating problem-solving options to try.
Module 7: That Sounds Good...but Does it Work for Me?	Outlines four different styles of problem-solving and asks participants to note when a problem comes up and write down which style they used to resolve it.
Module 8: Know the Signs	Guides participants to identify physical, mental, behavioral, and social indicators of when their self-management strategies are working effectively and when they are not.
Module 9: Putting It All Together	A review of the basic educational recommendations, and a review of the problem-solving approach to good self-management.

Content is aligned with chronic disease self-management education and recommendations, including: Problem solving as an evidence-based method of behavior change, American Association of Diabetes Educators Core Self-Management Behaviors (AADE 7™; renamed the Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists 7 Self-Care Behaviors [ADCES7]), Institute of Medicine (IOM) and Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Patient Self-Management Support programming for an informed, activated patient.

E. Delivery Format and Session Frequency

DECIDE is flexible in how it can be delivered. It can be delivered live, in-person or virtually, to individuals or groups. DECIDE is also available in a web-based, self-directed format. Each session contains 30 to 90 minutes of educational and skill-building content. Sessions are led by a facilitator who completes the 14-hour DECIDE Facilitator Training with a DECIDE Trainer. Group sessions often have a co-facilitator.

DECIDE sessions can be delivered weekly or every other week. One benefit of meeting every other week is it allows enough time for participants to practice using the skills in their real life between sessions.

II. Getting Started

A. Getting Started Checklist

Several steps are needed to get started with delivering DECIDE:

Y/N	Task
	Identify personnel who will be trained as DECIDE Facilitators to deliver the program
	Identify a space where DECIDE group meetings will be held
	Develop strategy for identification and recruitment of participants
	Identify the start date for the delivery of the DECIDE Program
	Develop recruitment materials
	Personnel complete the 14-hour DECIDE Facilitator Training
	Recruit Participants
	Print Participant Workbooks
	Obtain supplies for the meetings

B. Participant Eligibility and Outreach Considerations

Participants enrolled in the DECIDE program will meet the following requirements:

- Aged 18 years or older
- Diagnosis of one or more of the following chronic conditions:
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - High Blood Pressure
 - Chronic Kidney Disease
 - Heart Failure

Please note: If delivering in a group format, it is recommended that groups have 8-10 members. The minimum group size is 5 members.

Consider the unique needs of your organization and population to develop an appropriate approach for screening and recruitment of eligible participants for the program. Participants may be identified through referrals from health clinics and health providers or through health screenings and other events held in the community. See example participant invitation letter in Appendix A.

C. Logistical Considerations

Location and Space

For in-person group delivery, you will need to identify a space where the group will meet. The meeting space should be large enough to accommodate 8-10 people and have table(s) and chairs for all. Tables and chairs should be positioned in a circle or square, with participants facing each other, to help facilitate group discussion. When considering the location and space where the group will meet, it is important to consider accessibility and accommodation for people with disabilities.

III. DECIDE Facilitator Staffing and Training

A. Facilitator Qualifications

There are no educational requirements and no prerequisites to becoming a DECIDE Facilitator. However, personnel who are selected to be trained in DECIDE should be comfortable with working with groups of people, interested in learning and applying new skills, and passionate about engaging others in health education and behavior change.

B. Facilitator Expectations and Competencies

Facilitator Training is required for people who will serve as DECIDE Facilitators for any of the program versions. DECIDE Facilitator Training is 14 hours of instruction in what makes DECIDE work and how to deliver each of the 9 modules. The training is delivered by a DECIDE Trainer and is offered virtually or in-person.

The DECIDE Facilitator Training has 4 parts:

Part 1: Introduction to the DECIDE Program: An overview of the DECIDE program, the problem-solving approach, and the evidence supporting the program.

Part 2: Facilitation Strategies: Instruction on facilitation strategies to help DECIDE Facilitators deliver the program effectively.

Part 3: Training in the DECIDE Curriculum: A review of the content of each of the 9 modules of DECIDE.

Part 4: Practice Sessions: Facilitator trainees practice delivering portions of the DECIDE program. The DECIDE Trainer observes the mock delivery and provides feedback to help Facilitators refine skills.

During the practice sessions, the DECIDE Trainer will evaluate each Facilitator trainee's readiness to deliver DECIDE, guided by the ***Facilitator Expectations and Competency Checklist Form*** (see Appendix B). This process provides an opportunity to give feedback on the strengths, weaknesses, and strategies to improve. Facilitator trainees will be evaluated on the following competencies and skills:

Facilitator Competencies:

- Demonstrates knowledge of facilitator role and program procedures
- Demonstrates ability to use the Facilitator Guide to deliver the program in a standardized manner
- Demonstrates knowledge of the purpose/objectives of each Module

Facilitation Skills:

- Uses reflection to reinforce participants' ideas
- Empowers participants to be their own problem-solvers
- Does not impose their own ideas on to participants
- Maintains a good pace to allow for discussion (not too fast or too slow)
- Effectively uses demonstration to teach skills
- Demonstrates appropriate active listening skills (eye contact, head nodding, etc.)

C. Facilitator Training Materials

Each DECIDE Facilitator will receive a DECIDE Facilitator Guide and a DECIDE Participant Workbook, both of which they will bring to the DECIDE Facilitator Training and to each session as they deliver the DECIDE Program.

D. DECIDE Facilitator Certification

To become a certified DECIDE Facilitator, a person must:

- Complete the 14-hour DECIDE Facilitator Training led by a DECIDE Trainer (in-person or virtually).
- Satisfactorily complete a mock delivery of a module or part of a module.

To maintain certification, each DECIDE Facilitator must:

- Deliver DECIDE to at least one cohort per year.
- Complete required data elements (e.g., attendance for cohort participants) for each cohort delivered.
- Obtain a satisfactory rating on the ***DECIDE Facilitator Fidelity Checklist for Program Delivery***, completed by a supervisor/manager for each cohort (see Appendix C).

IV. DECIDE Fidelity Standards

To ensure participants benefit from this program, it is important for DECIDE Facilitators to deliver the program as designed, with accurate information and high-quality group-facilitation skills. Therefore, maintaining fidelity to the curriculum should always be encouraged.

DECIDE Facilitators should be observed at least once per DECIDE cohort by a supervisor or program manager using the ***DECIDE Facilitator Fidelity Checklist for Program Delivery*** (see Appendix C).

If the facilitator is weak in an area(s), then the organization's facilitator supervisor or manager should plan to discuss with the facilitator how this area(s) can be strengthened. Depending on the severity, consultation with a DECIDE Trainer may be indicated.

The organization should return completed Fidelity Checklists to the DECIDE Program Manager, Patti Ephraim (pephraim@northwell.edu), at least once per year.

To maintain certification, there must be at least one completed Fidelity Checklist for each DECIDE Facilitator, each year. If this expectation is not met, the DECIDE Facilitator's certification will be suspended, and they will need to complete recertification before they resume delivering DECIDE.

V. Implementation of DECIDE

A. Review of the Basics

- The group will meet every week for 9 weeks or every other week for 18 weeks.
- The first meeting will take approximately 90 minutes and each subsequent session will take about 60 minutes, but this can vary based on group size.
- The DECIDE Facilitator or the Co-Facilitator (if there is one) will contact participants the day before the meeting to remind them of the upcoming meeting.
- The DECIDE Facilitator will arrive early for each session to prepare the space and take attendance as people arrive.
- At the first session, the DECIDE Facilitator will distribute the DECIDE Participant Workbook with Module 1.
- At each subsequent session (2-9), the DECIDE facilitator will distribute to the participants the module for that session.

B. DECIDE Participant Workbook

Each participant will receive a DECIDE Participant Workbook, which is a binder that contains the 9 modules of the DECIDE curriculum. Participants will be expected to bring the workbook with them to each session. It will be theirs to keep after completing the program.

C. Workbook Printing Instructions and Assembly

Materials:

- Cover Page printed in color.
- DECIDE Participant Workbook PDF printed in color, single-sided, and 3-hole punched. **IMPORTANT: DO NOT print double-sided.**
- Dividers – numbered from 1-9 – for each of the 9 modules.
- 1” 3-ring Binder with a clear cover pocket on the outside and an interior pocket on the inside.

Assembly:

- Place the Cover Page on the front of the binder.
- Place the Welcome Letter and Module 1 in the binder. Place the first divider before Module 1.
- Move two handouts – ***“My Numbers”*** and ***“For the Record”*** – from the end of Module 1 to the front inside pocket.
- Place Modules 2-9 in a separate folder and store them for later.

We recommend distributing materials one module at a time. Start the binder with Module 1 only and store the remaining modules to add at each subsequent session. At subsequent sessions, provide the next divider and module during the “Check-In”.

When the program is delivered virtually, you can choose to use a printed version of the DECIDE Participant Workbook or an electronic fillable pdf version. If you choose to use a printed version, you can consider whether it is feasible to mail the modules one at a time or if you will have to mail the complete workbook with all 9 modules before the program begins.

D. Additional Session Materials

If delivering sessions in-person, bring:

- Pens or pencils for participants
- A sign-in sheet, if needed
- A surface to write on, such as a whiteboard and dry-erase marker or a flip chart and marker
- Optional: Some sites provide light snacks when delivering DECIDE in a group format. When choosing snacks, remember to provide healthy snacks and beverages, such as water, vegetables, and low (or no) sugar or sodium foods.

If delivering virtually, you will be given a slide deck with slides to share on screen for each module. You should be prepared to use the whiteboard of the video conferencing system.

VI. DECIDE Program Measures and Database

A. Program Measures

The following are recommended measures to collect from DECIDE participants at the beginning of the program (1 week prior to delivery of Module 1) and immediate post-program delivery (at 10-week or 20-week follow-up) or at 3-month post-program delivery (at 22-week or 32-week follow-up):

- **Questionnaires** (*available upon request*):
 - Disease Knowledge: **Diabetes and CVD Knowledge Test**
 - Health-related problem solving: **Health Problem-Solving Scale (HPSS)**
- **Clinical Measures:**
 - Hemoglobin A1C
 - Blood pressure
 - LDL
 - HDL

B. DECIDE Database

As DECIDE continues to be disseminated, we aim for continuous quality and performance improvement. To do so, the DECIDE team is maintaining a database that will enable accrual and analysis of de-identified data from customers who have used and are using the DECIDE Program. The database is comprised of de-identified, individual-level data representing different racial, ethnic, age, gender, socioeconomic status, and chronic condition populations that have been included in studies, clinical care, and community-based programs that implemented DECIDE.

To contribute data to the DECIDE database, there is some basic information that is required from each site implementing DECIDE. Each site is asked to complete the [DECIDE Delivery Modality and Format Form](#), which requests details about the modality (e.g., individual, group, self-directed) and format (e.g., in-person, telehealth, videoconferencing, phone) used to deliver DECIDE. Below is a table of variables we are capturing in the database per participant. If there is additional data that your site is collecting, we are happy to receive it as well. Please contact the DECIDE team decideprogram@northwell.edu to further discuss data collection and the process for sharing data, which requests details about the modality (e.g., individual, group, self-directed) and format (e.g., in-person, telehealth, videoconferencing, phone) used to deliver DECIDE. Below is a table of variables we are capturing in the database per participant. If there is additional data that your site is collecting, we are happy to receive it as well. Please contact the DECIDE team decideprogram@northwell.edu to further discuss data collection and the process for sharing data.

DECIDE Data Categories and Examples

	Category	Examples
Required	Demographics	Age in years Sex assigned at birth Gender identity Race Ethnicity
	Attendance	Attendance per session (yes/no) Total number of DECIDE sessions completed
Recommended (Optional)	Socioeconomic Status	Education (years or categorical) Household income and household size Type of health insurance
	Clinical*	Hemoglobin A1C Fasting Blood Sugar Blood Pressure LDL HDL
	Psychosocial*	Diabetes self-care/management Social support Diabetes distress Depression Social risk/social needs Health literacy
	DECIDE specific measures*	Health Problem-Solving Scale The Diabetes and CVD Knowledge Test

*If sharing this data, please provide data from at least two time points – before the program is delivered (i.e., baseline or pretest) and after the program has been delivered (i.e., immediately post-delivery, 3- month follow-up, or 6-month follow-up).

VII. References

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VIII. Appendix

Appendix A. DECIDE™ Self-Management Program Sample Participant Invitation Letter

Appendix B. DECIDE™ Self-Management Program Facilitator Expectations and Competency Checklist Form

Appendix C. DECIDE™ Self-Management Program Fidelity Standards: Facilitator Fidelity Checklist for Program Delivery

[Insert Site Logo]



Appendix A.

DECIDE™ Self-Management Program Sample Participant Invitation Letter

Dear [Name],

We are reaching out today to tell you about a new program for people living with [chronic condition] that will be offered through [organization name]. The **DECIDE™ Self-Management Program** can help you manage your [chronic condition].

During this 9-session program, you can learn new ways to help you manage [chronic condition] and overcome everyday challenges that get in your way. You will meet in a small group with a trained DECIDE Facilitator. You will learn to:

- Enhance your problem-solving skills
- Integrate healthy lifestyle behaviors into your daily life
- Cope with challenges

The program will be offered beginning [date] at [location]. The program is being offered to you at [no cost/a cost of \$XX]. Our staff will be following up with you by telephone in the coming week to explain more about the program and see if you are interested. You can also call us directly at [phone number] or email us at: [email address]. Please call today.

Best,

[organization name]

Appendix B.



DECIDE™ Self-Management Program

Facilitator Expectations and Competency Checklist Form

Trainee Name: _____

Expectations:

	Yes	No	Comment
Completes formal 14-hour DECIDE Facilitator Training led by a DECIDE Trainer (in-person or virtually)			
Completes a mock delivery of a module or part of a module satisfactorily (refer to list of competencies below)			

Competencies:

	Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Comment
1. Demonstrates knowledge of facilitator role and program procedures			
2. Demonstrates ability to use the Facilitator Guide to deliver the program in a standardized manner			
3. Demonstrates knowledge of the purpose/objectives of each Module			

Facilitation Skills:

	Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Comment
1. Used reflection to reinforce participants' ideas			
2. Empowered participants to be their own problem-solvers			
3. Did not impose their own ideas on to participants			
4. Maintained a good pace to allow for discussion (not too fast or too slow)			
5. Effectively used demonstration to teach skills			
6. Demonstrated appropriate active listening skills (eye contact, head nodding, etc.)			

Appendix C.



DECIDE™ Self-Management Program Fidelity Standards

Facilitator Fidelity Checklist for Program Delivery

The following is a checklist of fidelity components to ensure DECIDE Facilitators are delivering the program as designed with accurate information and high-quality group-facilitation skills. DECIDE Facilitators should be observed at least once per DECIDE cohort by a supervisor or program manager using this checklist.

If the facilitator is weak in an area(s), indicated by a “No” or “Needs Improvement” rating below, then the facilitator supervisor or manager should plan to discuss with the facilitator how this area(s) can be strengthened. Depending on the severity, consultation with a DECIDE Trainer may be indicated.

Before the Session

Evaluation Component	Yes	No	Comment
1. Arrived with enough time to set up			
2. Brought materials needed for the module as described in the Facilitator Guide			

During the Session - Facilitation Content and Process

Evaluation Component	Yes	No	Comment
3. Took attendance			
4. Welcomed participants as they arrived			
5. Started and ended on time			
6. Delivered the content as described in the Facilitator Guide			
7. Monitored participants to ensure they were following along			

During the Session - Facilitation Skills

Evaluation Component	Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Comments
8. Engaged with participants in the discussion			

Evaluation Component	Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Comments
9. Listened when participants were talking			
10. Communicated with all participants in a respectful and non-judgmental manner			
11. Kept participants on topic			
12. Encouraged participation from all			
13. Redirected if/when participants monopolized the conversation			
14. Conveyed appropriate empathy when participants shared problems, challenges, thoughts, and feelings			
15. Welcomed questions and effectively addressed them			
16. If applicable, worked well with a co-facilitator			

Note. Acceptable = does this most of the time; Needs Improvement = they did not do this at all or struggled a great deal.

Please return this form to the DECIDE Program Manager, Patti Ephraim, at pephraim@northwell.edu.