



Finding your way

A sharing decision making model created by mob, for mob

Description of the model

Finding your way was created by mob, for mob. This shared decision making model can be used when making decisions about COVID-19 vaccines and other health and wellbeing related concerns. The model was created with community members living and working from Eora, Wilyakali, Gandangara, Wiradjuri, Bundjalung, Darug and Yuin lands.

Shared decision making is about Aboriginal people connecting with healthcare professionals in a holistic and meaningful way – where mob feel safe and trusted to make informed decisions based on their values and beliefs. The process helps mob and healthcare professionals to make health decisions together.

Finding your way tells the story of an individual's journey. We all start at the beginning, but we choose different paths as we walk through our country, as shown in Figure 1.

The circular design of the model, and everything in it, represents the holistic concept of Aboriginal health: physical, social, emotional, cultural and spiritual wellbeing for the individual and the community. The circle represents a continuous cycle a person moves through when interacting with the health system and making decisions about their health; finding their way in a forward, backward or sideways direction.

The centre image represents the individual and the glowing aura radiates positive thinking and energy for the overall decision making process. This image interconnects with many circles represented holistically to prompt conversations and guide the shared decision making process. The tracks from the centre circle are interconnected and lead to four larger circles. These circles represent the scaffolding needed for Aboriginal people to make health decisions.

- **Community, family and kinship** refers to the interconnectedness of Aboriginal people and the importance of community and family connections in all aspects of Aboriginal life. This circle intentionally connects to 'feeling safe' and 'sharing your stories'. This is to illustrate the importance of yarning as a process for communication, information sharing and making health decisions with family. It is about fostering reciprocal relationships so that individuals feel safe to share their stories.
- **Culture and connecting to land and sea** refers to the importance of the cultural determinants of health and the centrality of land and water in culture. This circle intentionally connects to 'sharing your stories' and 'feeling trusted' to illustrate the importance of local knowledge, language, culture and connection to country. It is about finding common ground through sharing stories and yarning about what 'actually matters' to the individual. When culture is embraced, it creates a sense of trust for the individual.
- **Personal experiences** centres around the social determinants of health and influencing factors such as housing, education, income, childhood experiences and access to healthcare. Aboriginal people face many hardships. This circle intentionally connects to 'feeling trusted' and 'sharing your truths' to illustrate the impacts of colonisation, racism and intergenerational trauma when making health decisions. It is about being mindful of the health inequalities.

- Physical and spiritual connections** centres on the notion of physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. When the spirit is strong, you can make good health decisions. This circle intentionally connects to ‘feeling safe’ and ‘sharing your truths’ to illustrate Aboriginal people’s connection to all things, their deepest thoughts, attitudes, judgements, values and beliefs. It is about ways of knowing, being and doing that are deeply rooted in ancestral knowledge systems that inform shared decision making.

The model has eight inner circles that represent the core elements of shared decision making from a cultural perspective. Each circle is a prompt to have a yarn and a guide to the shared decision making process, as shown in Figure 2.

Finding your way aligns with shared decision making core elements, including describing options, benefits and risks, weighing up the options and tailoring information. As a result of adapting the model with Aboriginal people, *Finding your way* reflects a holistic approach to health and wellbeing, includes family and other cultural factors, and highlights the non-linear approach Aboriginal people often take to health decision making.

The model and all resources are available for download from the Agency for Clinical Innovation’s [Finding your way: Shared decision making website](#).

Figure 1: Finding your way: A shared decision making model



ARTWORK BY:
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Figure 2: *Finding your way* yarn prompts

	
<p>Yarn to bring it all together and decide to act now if ready (e.g. have the vaccine) or wait.</p>	<p>Yarn about health needs and options available including the benefits and risks of the vaccines. Ask questions, share knowledge and feelings about the vaccines.</p>
	
<p>Yarn about taking a break (if needed) and making the decision later. Come back and yarn on another day.</p>	<p>Yarn about the next steps, including how and where to get vaccinated and what might get in the way. Follow up later.</p>
	
<p>Yarn about what is happening today, including social, emotional and wellbeing needs and supports.</p>	<p>Yarn about family and mob. If needed, bring others into the yarn for support.</p>
	
<p>Yarn about ways of knowing, being and doing to inform health decisions based on a person's values and beliefs.</p>	<p>Yarn about the vaccines' possible benefits and risks. Compare options and weigh up the odds individually and for family and mob.</p>