What Matters to Me

A way to share what matters to me

With everyone who supports me

Background

The most positive experiences of care occur when we know what matters to a person. Knowing what matters to a person helps us to understand their priorities and needs, and how best to support them to achieve them. We therefore recognise the need to start with what matters to a person, whether that person is trying to maintain good health and wellbeing, managing long term conditions or living with complex chronic conditions.

Knowing what matters to a person supports our conversations and ensures we work together to decide the actions most suitable for them. In turn, this will enable us to tailor our approach to each conversation, using our time in a way that best supports a person's current needs. It allows us to focus on what will be of most benefit to them and what will help them to live a life that is meaningful and fulfilling.

How it helps

 'What Matters to Me' is part of a suite of patient-centred care approaches. It is designed to complement, streamline and integrate with other personalised care approaches and tools.

For example, 'What Matters to Me' supports 'better conversations'. It also enables decisions to be truly shared; supporting shared decision making conversations to enable you and a person to work together to decide what action is most suitable. It takes account of an individual's own circumstances and what is important to them alongside your valuable knowledge of the benefits and risks of available options.

Additionally, by knowing what matters to a person, you will be able to better understand a person's level of self-awareness, self-management skills, confidence and goal orientation; all of which is required to establish 'Patient Activation' levels.
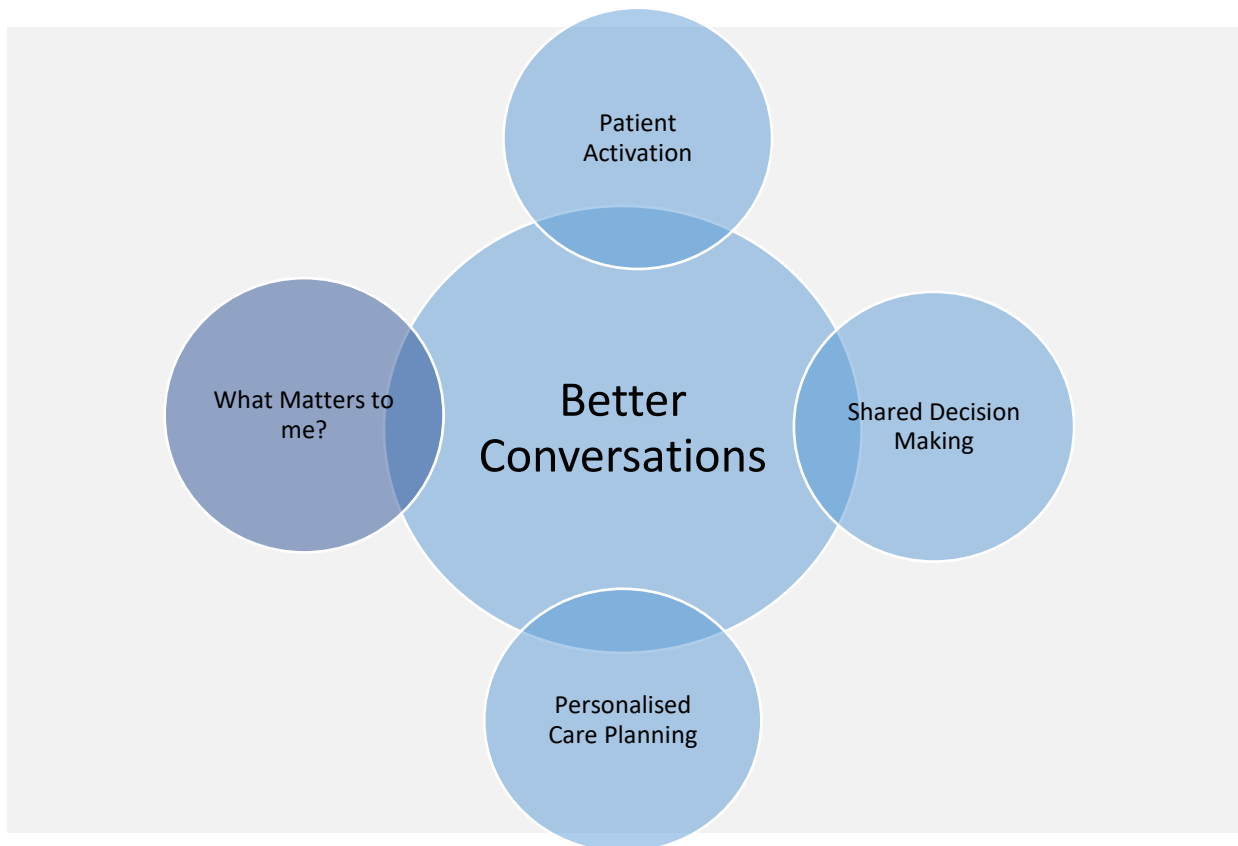
By implementing sharing functionality, you will be able to see previously recorded statements to these prompts, whether gathered via a conversation with another health and /or care professional or inputted directly by a person via an application such as Helm (Person Held Record). This will ensure that people are not repeatedly asked the same questions. You will be able, at a glance, to see what has been said / recorded previously to better inform you when commencing your conversation.

It is important to note that 'What Matters to Me' is not a formal assessment and it is not a care plan. It is a means of gaining insight that will enable you to work with a person to find the best way forward. Alternatively 'What Matters to Me' greatly enhances care / support planning activities by prompting a conversation that helps you to focus on what will provide the most benefit to that person.   It allows for an open conversation, establishes dialogue and leads to the discovery of new things about the person; things that would otherwise not have been surfaced through a traditional assessment. Furthermore, it reduces the risk of fragmentation and conflicting support and care goals.

Our city wide aim

To support more person-centred systems of care, our key aim in Leeds is to commence using an agreed and core set of questions that will prompt a person to state what matters to

them. Additionally, we aim to enable a person to manage and own this information and empower them to act upon it.

'What Matters to Me' is a work-stream within a larger project that aims to reduce the division between primary, secondary, community, voluntary and social care organisations by establishing standardisation of data sets and enabling this information to be shared between organisations and across forms and systems. Our work links to national standards such as the independent Professional Record Standards Body (PRSB) who oversee the development and sustainability of professional record standards. The PRSB have developed a set of person centred prompts known as 'About Me' and attempts have been made to align to these. Their insights via consultations with health and care professionals and the public showed that there is much interest in 'About Me' data sets.   'About Me', along with medications and allergies were listed as the most important data sets to capture and share by GPs, secondary care doctors and people who use services.

There is a clear message from service users that their requirements are as important as a professional's requirements. For some people, the ability to consider important information about themselves can mean the difference between improved quality of life and supported self-management; and poorer quality of life and dependency upon costly services. Over 80% of survey respondents said that an 'About Me' section should be prioritised as part of the core information standard.

How you can help

Proof of 'What Matters to me'; its usefulness and usability will come through trialling it in practice, refining the data sets and overcoming barriers so that they can be adopted widely for the benefit of you and the people you serve. Asking "What matters to you?" will enable you to appreciate people as full humans and provide you with a focus on what will most benefit them. Most importantly, it will help the person to live the sort of life that is meaningful and fulfilling for them.