

DECIDE Communication Approach: A Novel Approach to Increase the Quality and Quantity of Vaccination in Pregnancy Communication

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Background

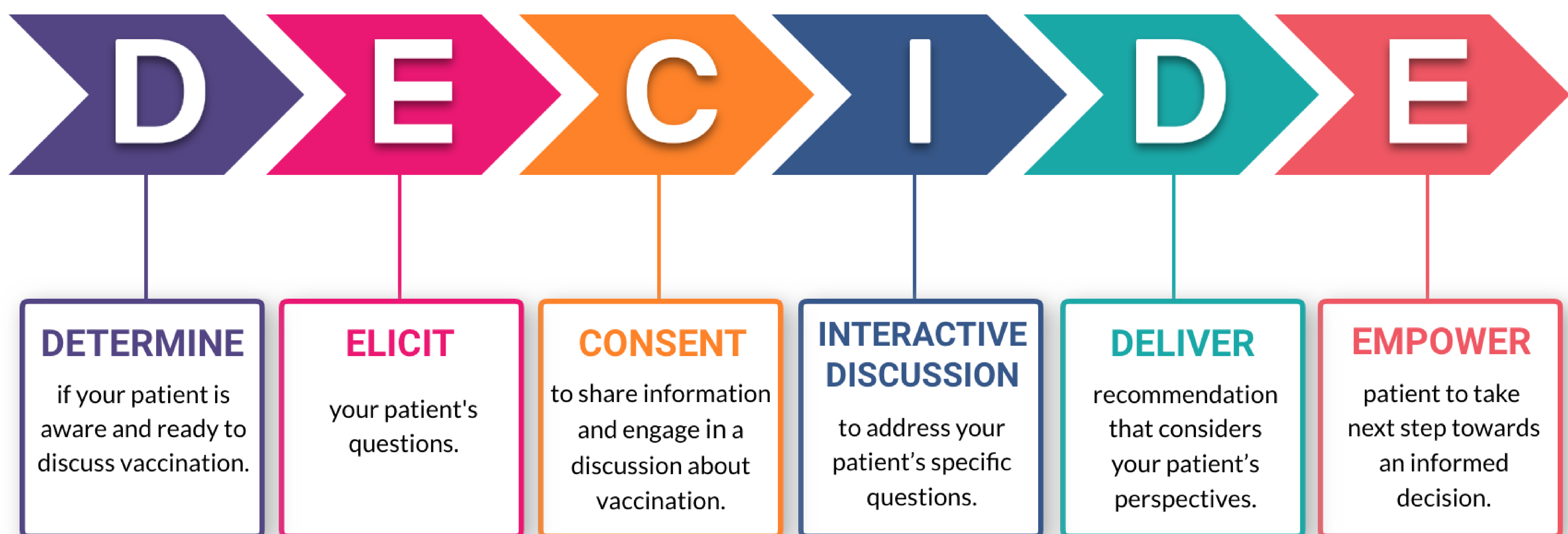
Vaccination in pregnancy (VIP) offers essential protection for pregnant individuals and their babies, yet uptake remains low. Healthcare provider (HCP) recommendations predict vaccination during pregnancy intention and uptake before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Existing communication strategies do not address the complexities of vaccine decision-making during pregnancy.

Our team co-developed a novel, pregnancy-specific communication approach to support shared vaccine decision-making in pregnancy with pregnant persons, providers and experts in behaviour change, person-centred care and implementation science.



Results

We identified six communication frameworks and evaluated them for theoretical coherence and feasibility in perinatal care settings. Interviews with experts in maternal-child health highlighted the need for simple, scalable strategies to improve HCPs' self-efficacy in VIP communication skills. Feedback from focus groups with parents emphasized balancing clear providers' recommendations and shared decision-making. The final communication approach arose following iterative co-design sessions. DECIDE addresses critical gaps in vaccine communication by empowering HCPs to deliver clear, tailored vaccination recommendations while respecting patients' autonomy and desire for active participation in the decision-making process.



Conclusion

DECIDE is a novel communication approach unique to pregnancy that equips HCPs with effective tools to support pregnant persons in making informed vaccination decisions. Future studies will evaluate its practical application in Canadian perinatal care settings.

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