

# I DECIDE LVAD

Better conversations, better decisions



Colorado Program for  
Patient Centered Decisions

[www.PatientDecisionAid.org/LVAD](http://www.PatientDecisionAid.org/LVAD)

The LVAD decision-making process is complex—and life-changing—for patients and caregivers. Clinicians and staff often have limited time for these difficult conversations and may lack quality, unbiased materials to share.

The evidence-based *I DECIDE: LVAD* decision aid is a free, easy-to-use tool that provides realistic, comprehensive information about LVAD and the alternatives.

## GETTING STARTED | Using *I DECIDE: LVAD*

### Start at the beginning

We have found that the best use of *I DECIDE: LVAD* is at the **beginning of patient education**, prior to any decision on treatment. After LVAD implantation, patients and caregivers consistently say they wish they had known about LVAD earlier.

### Useful anywhere decisions are made

*I DECIDE: LVAD* can be used at many points in the decision process including:



#### • Referral Clinic

*I DECIDE: LVAD* can be given to patients in referral clinics as an introduction to the therapy prior to being seen at an LVAD center.



#### • Heart Failure Clinic

*I DECIDE: LVAD* can be given in clinic as early education to patients who may need an LVAD in the future.



#### • Hospital

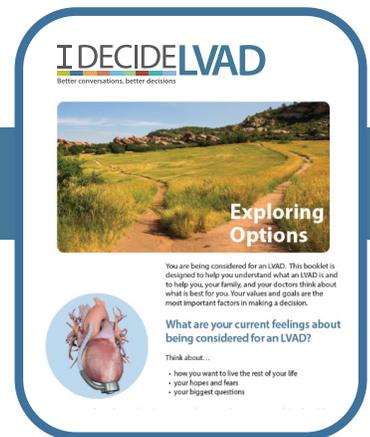
*I DECIDE: LVAD* can be provided to patients going through LVAD evaluation as an additional resource. The brochure and video can be viewed independently or with members of the LVAD team to give a **foundation of knowledge** for subsequent discussions and formal LVAD education.



### A tool for all team members

Anyone on the clinical team can provide patients with *I DECIDE: LVAD*. In some situations, it may even be beneficial for multiple team members to present it at different times during the decision-making process.

- **LVAD coordinators** are the clinicians who most commonly use *I DECIDE: LVAD*. The formal teaching session is an ideal setting for this tool.
- **Social workers** may also use *I DECIDE: LVAD* during their patient evaluations.
- **Cardiologists, surgeons, and advance practice providers (APPs), and even primary care physicians** can refer to *I DECIDE: LVAD* or provide it as an introduction to conversations about LVAD or alternative therapies.
- **Palliative care clinicians** can use *I DECIDE: LVAD* during LVAD evaluation consults.



As part of my psycho-social assessment, I'm using the [*I DECIDE: LVAD*] brochure as a speaking tool, as an exploration, as a way to discuss more issues around the LVAD.

[Social worker]

# Implementing *I DECIDE: LVAD* | Frequently Asked Questions

**How can I fit this in? I'm worried *I DECIDE: LVAD* will add time and effort.**

*I DECIDE: LVAD* is flexible and designed to be adapted to best fit the structure of each individual program. It can be used as a self-directed resource for patients, viewed on their own time. Or, it can be a tool to help guide conversations or teaching. *I DECIDE: LVAD* fits seamlessly into already existing LVAD teaching sessions. In fact, clinicians have reported that it often saves them time with patients, leading to more direct, deeper conversations and accelerating teaching.

**How do I start? I'm concerned that implementing *I DECIDE: LVAD* will be difficult.**

The first step to successful implementation is for a team champion (you!) to discuss *I DECIDE: LVAD* with the entire LVAD team to obtain buy-in. Once the team is on board, determine who will be the best person to provide the tool to patients. Often, this is the LVAD coordinator, who is likely already giving materials to patients and providing some education. How you use *I DECIDE: LVAD* will likely change over time as you learn what works best for your team.

**Will *I DECIDE: LVAD* lower my program's LVAD implant rate?**

*I DECIDE: LVAD* improves the decision-making process and decision quality for patients and their loved ones. If patients make more informed person-centered decisions, they are more likely to experience better outcomes. For those patients who are unsure about getting the device, allowing them to make an educated decision, even if it means declining the LVAD, will likely lead to better patient satisfaction and better care.

**What if my program requires our logo on all materials?**

We allow programs to modify the *I DECIDE: LVAD* materials to include their logo and any program-specific information. Programs interested in modifying the materials must seek permission from us, including approval of any changes prior to use. Contact us if you're interested in making modifications to the materials.

**Where can I get professional-looking hard copies of *I DECIDE: LVAD* materials?**

For programs interested in using *I DECIDE: LVAD*, we will provide 50 free copies to start. We also sell the materials at cost on our website, where they can be ordered in bulk. These packets come with a professionally printed brochure and DVD of the video, assembled together in a pocket folder. Please see contact information on bottom of page 4 to order.

**My hospital and clinic do not have DVD players in the patient rooms. How can I show the video?**

Many programs show the *I DECIDE: LVAD* video directly from our website using hospital computers or a patient's own computer, tablet, or smartphone. If a hospital has a patient education channel, we will work with your institution to get the video uploaded to the channel for patient viewing. The DVD can also be used as a take-home resource for patients.



After reading the information, [patients] come up with questions, so it's obviously helping them understand [LVADs] to the point where they can come up with some thoughtful questions about the devices.

[Surgical nurse practitioner]

# Developing *I DECIDE: LVAD*

*I DECIDE: LVAD* was systematically developed using the Ottawa Decision Support Framework and International Patient Decision Aid Standards (IPDAS), as well as formal input from patients, caregivers, cardiologists, surgeons, nurses, and LVAD coordinators.<sup>1,2</sup> The *I DECIDE: LVAD* team revised the brochure and video numerous times to ensure that all stakeholders felt the decision aids were accurate, readable, and unbiased.

*I DECIDE: LVAD* is updated annually to incorporate evolving information on devices, techniques, and patient outcomes.



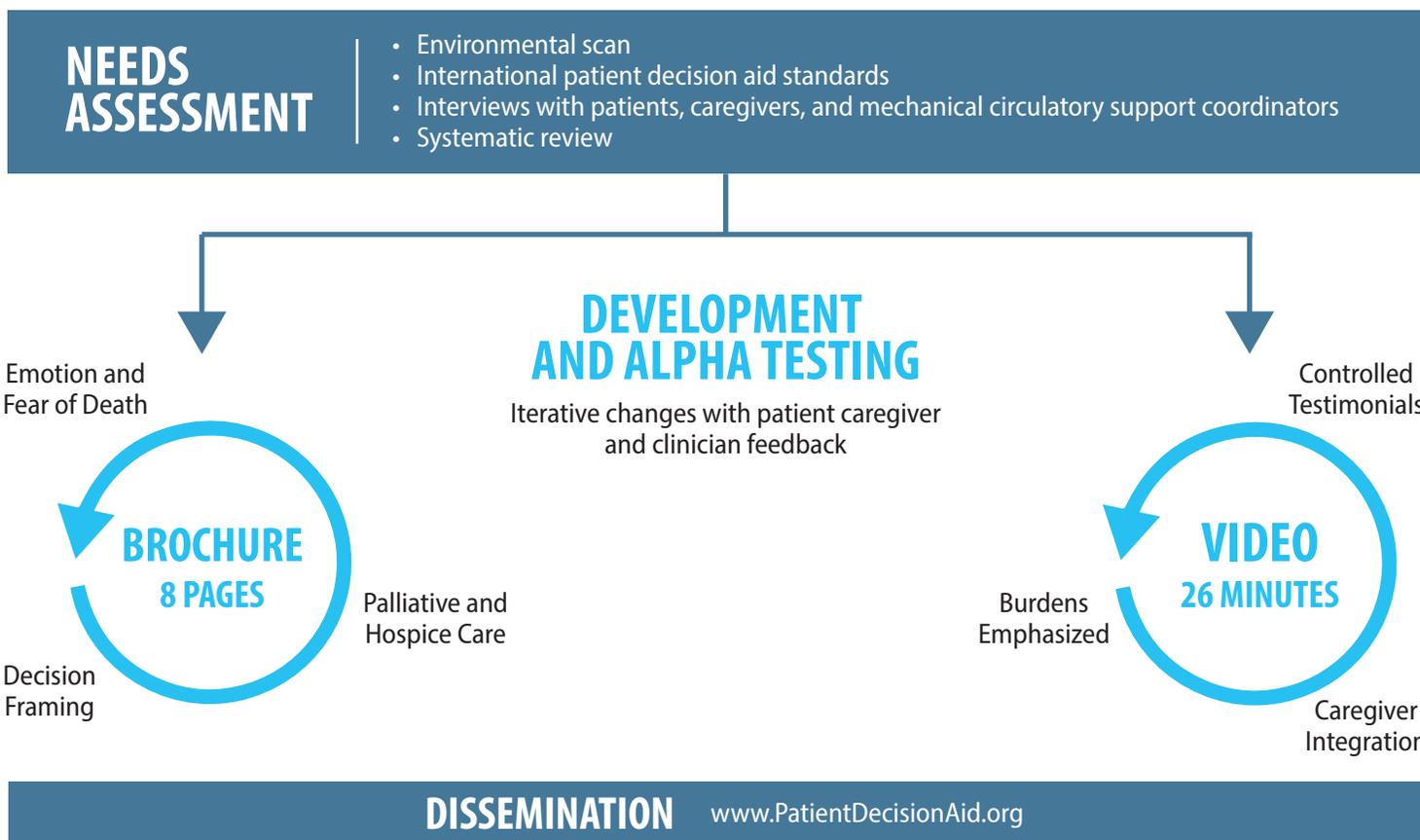
## IPDAS COMPONENTS:

- Equal display of treatment options
- Side-by-side comparison of risks and benefits of each option
- Explicit and implicit values clarification exercises



## COMPONENTS ADDED BASED ON NEEDS ASSESSMENT:

- Content to address emotions and fear of death
- Reframed the decision around “living” with or without an LVAD
- Palliative and hospice care sections
- Section addressing caregiver concerns



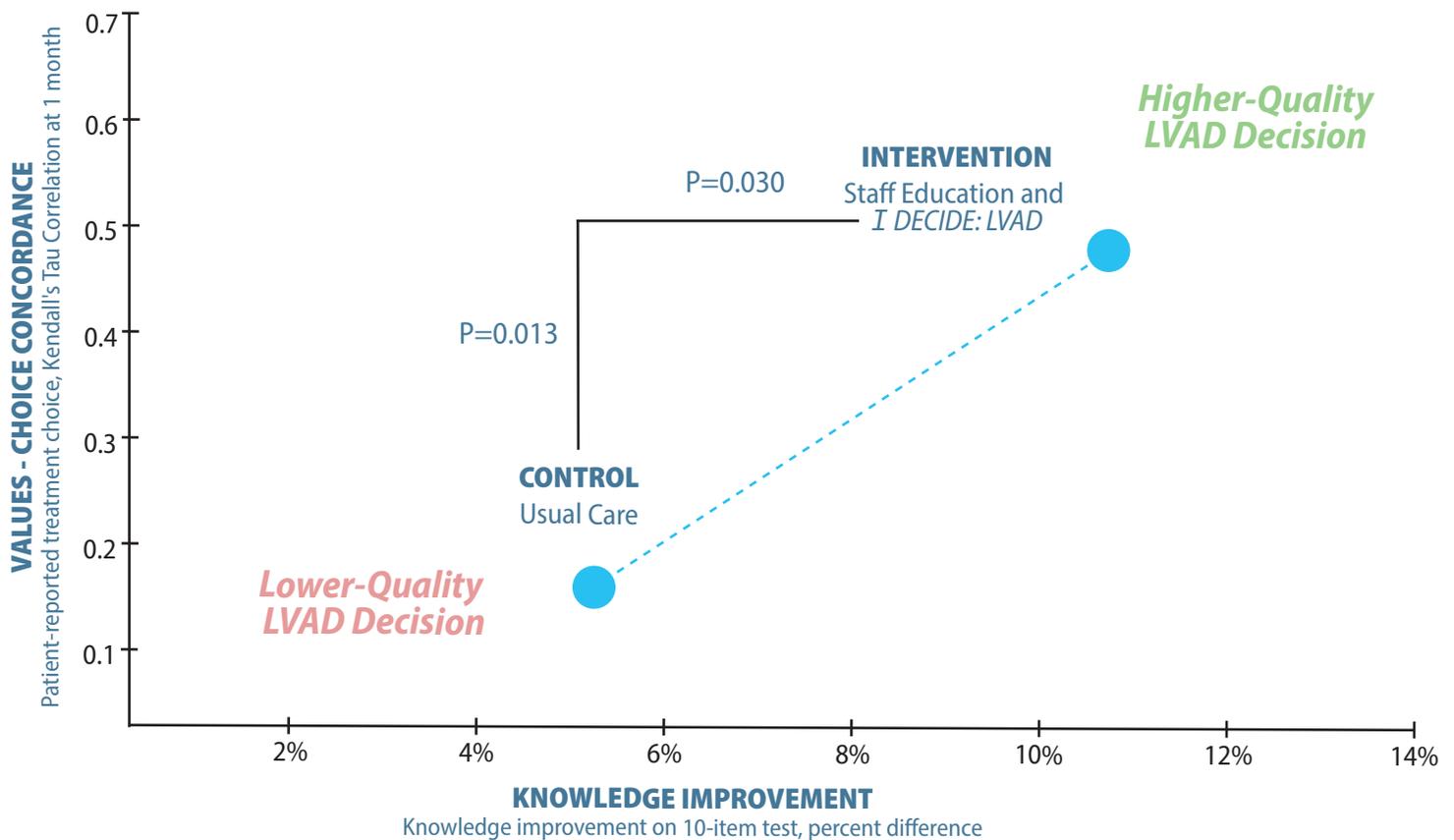
It's valuable as a decision-making tool...it has sparked more questions about LVAD [and] about other options.

[Nurse practitioner]

# A Tested, Evidence-Based Tool

*I DECIDE: LVAD's* effectiveness was tested in the DECIDE-LVAD Trial, a multi-center, randomized, stepped-wedge trial. Among six diverse LVAD centers across the country, 248 patients and 182 of their caregivers were enrolled. The study found that *I DECIDE: LVAD* significantly increased the quality of patients' and caregivers' decisions:

- Patients' knowledge of 10 key aspects of decision making for LVAD significantly improved ( $p=0.030$ )<sup>3</sup>
- Agreement between patients' stated values and their reported treatment choice significantly improved ( $p=0.013$ )<sup>3</sup>
- Agreement between caregivers' stated values for their loved one and their reported treatment choice significantly improved ( $p=0.026$ )<sup>4</sup>



I think it provides a nice, unbiased view on what [LVAD] is like on both ends of the spectrum.

[LVAD coordinator]

For additional resources, visit: [www.PatientDecisionAid.org/LVAD](http://www.PatientDecisionAid.org/LVAD). You can contact the developers at the Colorado Program for Patient Centered Decisions: Dan Matlock, MD, MPH, Larry Allen, MD, MHS, and Colleen McIlvennan, DNP, ANP at [LVADDecisionAid@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:LVADDecisionAid@cuanschutz.edu).

1. Thompson et al. Development of a decision aid for patients with advanced heart failure considering a destination therapy left ventricular assist device. *JACC Heart Fail.* 2015;3(12):965-976.  
 2. McIlvennan et al. Clinical outcomes after continuous-flow left ventricular assist device: a systematic review. *Circ Heart Fail.* 2014;7(6):1003-1013.  
 3. Allen et al. Effectiveness of an intervention supporting shared decision making for destination therapy left ventricular assist device: the DECIDE-LVAD randomized clinical trial. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2018;178(4):520-529.  
 4. McIlvennan et al. Caregivers of patients considering destination therapy left ventricular assist device and a shared decision-making intervention: the DECIDE-LVAD trial. *JACC Heart Fail.* 2018;6(11):904-913.

