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YOU DECIDES WHO DECIDES: AN ONLINE TOOL FOR CHOOSING ENDURING POWERS OF ATTORNEY

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Background The Office of the Public Advocate's (OPA) experience of enduring powers of attorney indicates that the crucial step of thinking about who to appoint as substitute decision-maker and considering the sorts of decisions those people are likely to make, is too often overlooked in the haste to get the documents in place. OPA saw the need for resources that encourage people to consider these issues as an important part of the process.

Aim To develop an online, interactive facility, accessed through the OPA website, that guides participants to consider their important criteria when choosing substitute decision-makers.

Methods We established a collaborative partnership with Associate Professor Jeanette Lawrence, Psychological Sciences, University of Melbourne. A/Professor Lawrence contributed psychological expertise on drawing out values and beliefs without bias and using stories as a vehicle to do this. She works with a team of graphics and programming experts who translate these ideas into computer programmes. A steering committee met regularly to develop the programme, which was subsequently trialled with 40 participants.

Results The programme was launched on the OPA website in October 2012. In addition, the programme has been produced in CD format to broaden accessibility.

Discussion This tool assists in effective planning for the future through the appointment of appropriate representatives.

Conclusion Feedback indicates that the programme succeeds in getting people to think about criteria for whom to appoint as their representative and fills a resource gap.