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SUBSTITUTE DECISION MAKERS

- In Long Term Care the Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) is usually the person who has Power of Attorney for Finances and/or Personal Care
 - The Power of Attorney (POA) is appointed by the person when he/she is capable
 - The POA takes effect when the person is no longer capable
 - Decisions are made according to what the person would have wanted
- People with developmental disabilities often do not have an appointed Power of Attorney
 - They may have always required assistance with decision making
 - They may never have been able to make their treatment decisions known in advance

Therefore, people with Developmental Disabilities will more likely have a Substitute Decision Maker to assist with decisions

- The Substitute Decision Maker may be a family member or a Public Guardian and Trustee (PGT)
- All members of the health care team should know who acts as the Substitute Decision Maker for the person with a developmental disability

- People with developmental disabilities may be able to give consent in some situations
- **That does not mean that the person is able to give consent in all situations**
- When a Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) is used, the SDM is given all of the information that the person would have had if the person was making the decision
- If the wishes of the person are unknown, the SDM decides in the "Best Interests" of the person



HOW TO WORK WITH A SUBSTITUTE DECISION MAKER

- ✓ The person with the developmental disability should make decisions whenever possible
- ✓ Ask the person if you may share information with the Substitute Decision Maker
- ✓ If the person does not consent to sharing information, the team should be consulted before proceeding
- ✓ Provide all relevant information to the Substitute Decision Maker
- ✓ The decision of the SDM is the same as if the person made the decision
- ✓ If you disagree with the decision of the SDM, the team may be able to request intervention from the Public Guardian and Trustee