



TeamSTEPPS® TIPS

Advocacy and Assertion

What is advocacy and assertion?



The advocacy and assertion tool should be used to challenge a decision. As a member of the health care team, we are required to **advocate** for the patient, whenever you feel a team members' viewpoint (including your own) doesn't coincide with that of a decision maker. You should **assert** a corrective action in a firm and respectful manner.

A strong assertive statement should:

- Respect and support authority
- Clearly assert concerns and suggestions
- Use an assertive, nonthreatening statement
 - Make an opening
 - State the concern
 - State the problem
 - Offer a solution
 - Reach an agreement



What is an example of advocacy and assertion?

A medical floor nurse is assigned to a patient following a myocardial infarction. The attending physician provides the final treatment, reviews the clinical situation and determines that the patient is well enough to be discharged.



Before the patient is discharged, the nurse checks the patient's vitals one last time. The nurse finds that the blood pressure and heart rate are substantially elevated. Despite these concerns, the nurse discharges the patient because the physician made it clear that the patient was well enough to go home. Besides, the physician is a well-respected authority at the hospital.

Instead of discharging the patient, the nurse should have gone back to the physician and voiced her concern over discharging the patient, citing his abnormal vital signs, in a nonthreatening, respectful manner.

Where can I get more information about advocacy and assertion?

Visit <https://www.leadingagekansas.org/tsmaterials>