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Online Resources on Supported Decision-Making for Irish Adults With Intellectual Disabilities and Their Family and Professional Carers: An Environmental Scan

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study aimed to determine what information is publicly available online for people with intellectual disabilities in Ireland and their professional and family carers regarding supported decision-making and the recently commenced Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act.

Methods: Potentially eligible online resources identified through a Google search and consultation with relevant experts were reviewed for eligibility using a two-stage screening process. Resources selected for inclusion underwent data extraction and were assessed for quality and accessibility using a modified version of the Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool.

Findings: Of 101 resources identified, 13 were deemed eligible for inclusion. Resources were mostly targeted towards professional carers and rarely focused on the everyday decision-making needs of people with intellectual disabilities. Evaluation of these resources demonstrated poor understandability and accessibility.

Conclusions: The findings indicate a gap in the provision of practical information on supported decision-making and the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act to people with intellectual disabilities and their decision-making supporters in Ireland, and highlight the need for the codesign of accessible resources to guide the implementation of supported decision-making in more everyday contexts that are tailored to the needs and preferences of this cohort.

1 | Introduction

A key component of autonomy in life events for people with intellectual disabilities is the acknowledgement of their right to make their own decisions, with as much or as little assistance as they themselves determine is required (Flynn 2020; Keys 2017; United Nations 2006). There has been a historical tendency to view all people with intellectual disabilities as requiring the same type and extent of assistance in decision-making, or even to assume they are incapable of making decisions at all (Jenkinson 1993). This has resulted in various paternalistic practices regarding the right of

persons with intellectual disabilities to make their own decisions, including the appointment of guardians, who then have the right to make decisions on behalf of the person with little requirement for their inclusion or consultation during the process (R. N. Davies et al. 2017; Giertz 2018; Martinis et al. 2023). Although still common, such practices are being slowly phased out in favour of more inclusive, open methods of decisional assistance (Alston 2017; Brady et al. 2019; Kohn et al. 2012).

It is now more readily acknowledged that decision-making for people with intellectual disabilities is frequently a collaborative

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Summary

- Supported decision-making is when you get help to make a decision from people you trust. They help you to understand your choices. Then you can decide what is best for you.
- Ireland has a new law called the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act. It started in 2023. This law helps people who find it hard to make decisions. The law means other people cannot just decide for you.
- We looked online for information about this new law. We wanted simple information for people with intellectual disabilities and their supporters. We found 13 websites that were helpful.
- More simple information is needed online. We need clear guides on how to make decisions every day using this law. This is important for people with intellectual disabilities and their supporters in Ireland.

process, with family and/or professional carers acting in the role of guide, assistant, or information gatherer, as needed (Bigby et al. 2022a, 2022b; Browning et al. 2021; Douglas and Bigby 2020). This process is unique to every person with intellectual disability, whose support needs vary depending on their environment, the type of decision in question, and their level of support needs (Bigby et al. 2022a; Douglas and Bigby 2020). There is also a wider acknowledgement of the need for decision-making processes that do not require people with intellectual disabilities to undergo formal assessments and negotiations in order for the decision to be made, as not every decision made by people with intellectual disabilities requires a formal, rigorous process to explore or execute (Harding and Tascioglu 2017). For this reason, different inclusive methods of decisional support that allow for a more informal approach are becoming more widely adopted among people with intellectual disabilities and their supporters, including supported decision-making (SDM) (Blanck and Martinis 2018; Browning et al. 2021; Douglas and Bigby 2020).

SDM has many definitions both within and outside of the research context, but fundamentally rests on the premise that the person who requires support chooses someone to assist them in making decisions, with the final decision resting with the supported person (Center for Public Representation 2022). The end goal is to afford the supported person the dignity and freedom to make decisions about their own life, without undue influence or pressure from others (Kohn et al. 2012). In this manner, SDM has been presented as an alternative to guardianship practices, as the latter are typically much more restrictive, and rely upon best interest decision-making by placing the bulk of decision-making power in the hands of the legal guardian rather than the person themselves (Kohn et al. 2012). In practice, the person with intellectual disability is at the centre of the decision-making process and selects the people they wish to include in their support circle. The composition and operationalisation of this support circle is tailored to the supported person's needs, preferences and wishes (Bach and Kerzner 2010; Shogren et al. 2017). The members of this support circle may include family carers such as parents or

siblings, close friends and/or professional carers such as the person's key worker, residential staff, or day or outreach staff. These supporters work with the person with intellectual disability and each other to facilitate the decision-making process in a manner of the supported person's choosing (Shogren et al. 2017). This may be via helping the person to gather information on the prospective decision to be made before they choose a course of action on their own, assisting them in understanding outcomes, or in the case of people with communication difficulties and/or higher support needs, representing the person's wishes based upon their knowledge of the person's preferences and personality (Bach and Kerzner 2010). The majority of research on SDM to date has focused on its legal and policy implications; however, studies focused on stakeholder experiences suggest that SDM results in improved outcomes related to self-determination and life satisfaction for people with intellectual disabilities through affording them the opportunity for a collaborative relationship with their decisional supporters (Douglas and Bigby 2020; Gudelytė et al. 2024).

In Ireland, the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act (ADMA: Oireachtas 2015), which was signed into law in 2015, provides a statutory framework to assist adults experiencing difficulties with decision-making, articulating a range of decision-making supports and placing the will and preferences of the person at the heart of decision-making (Kelly 2017). This represents a fundamental shift from traditional guardianship and substituted decision-making models in favour of an approach which encourages people requiring decisional support to seek it on their own terms in a manner that allows them to be causal agents in their own lives. To achieve this, a tiered system of support operated by a new government body called the Decision Support Service (DSS) has been established, which accounts for the differing levels in decisional support a person may require. Within this system, support can take the form of: (i) a decision-making assistant, who helps gather information related to a decision, with the bulk of decision-making being completed by the person themselves unassisted; (ii) a co-decision maker, who helps the person in making decisions throughout the entire process; or (iii) a decision-making representative, who interprets the will and preferences of a person unable to directly communicate their decisions themselves during the decision-making process (Decision Support Service 2023a). This development increases Ireland's compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD: United Nations 2006), and has important implications for individuals with intellectual disabilities, their families and service providers.

Following an amendment in 2022, the ADMA was commenced in April 2023, formally removing guardianship as the primary method of decisional support for people with intellectual disabilities. The DSS, which was created alongside the Act, opened its doors upon its commencement and launched a public information campaign on the ADMA. However, a Red C poll taken in May 2023 showed that 67% of Irish citizens had not heard of the Act and were not aware of its purpose, with only 4% reporting that they had a good understanding of the Act (Safeguarding Ireland 2023). Furthermore, much of the literature on the ADMA published to date has focused on the legal framework it describes, its effect on policy, and impacts on

TABLE 1 | Data extraction table of online resources selected for inclusion in the environmental scan.

URL	Organisation	Type of info	Target group	Accessibility	Relevance
https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/national-office-human-rights-equality-policy/assisted-decision-making-capacity-act/	Health Service Executive	Government body information	Professional carers Family carers Healthcare professionals	Reasonably free from jargon Suggests further reading No easy-read material	Specifically about ADMA Gives links to e-learning
https://inclusionireland.ie/assisted-decision-making/	Inclusion Ireland	Disability service information and educational material	People with intellectual disabilities	Easy-read language Video explanations Tailored towards increasing understanding	Curated information for people with intellectual disabilities to increase their understanding of the ADMA and SDM
https://alzheimer.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/ASI-Position-Assisted-Decision-Making-Capacity-Act-2015.pdf	Alzheimer's Society of Ireland	Position paper	Family and professional carers of people with dementia	Clear but no easy-read language	Some relevance for people with intellectual disabilities
https://www.iasw.ie/events/312-assisted-decision-making-capacity-act-2015	Irish Association of Social Workers	Informational material (webinar)	Social workers Professional carers	Not determinable	Webinar aimed toward professionals with social work training but not the lay reader
https://www.ul.ie/engage/sites/default/files/2017,%20No%2014%20The%20Assisted%20Decision-making%20(Capacity)%20Act%202015_20Application.pdf	University of Limerick	Informational material (legal)	Legal professionals Professional carers Family carers	Contains lay definitions Accessible to lay reader Not easy-read	Explains in straightforward terms the legal components of ADMA and how to legally apply them
https://familycarers.ie/carer-supports/help-guidance/carers-and-capacity-briefing-for-family-carers-on-the-capacity-act	Family Carers Ireland	Resource guide	Family carers	Contains videos and slides from information sessions Aimed at family carers, lay language used Not easy read	Explains context of Decision Support Service and ADMA in terms of capacity
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHFyULekJeg	Inclusion Ireland	Informational material	Family carers Professional carers People with intellectual disabilities	Clear with jargon explained Video speaker goes through information slowly and explains all content, making it accessible	Good overview of Decision Support Service and ADMA in context
https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/health/legal_matters_and_health/advance_care_directives.html	Citizens Information	Government information	Professional carers Family carers	Minimal jargon Not easy-read	Specific to advance healthcare directives, but relevant to their place in ADMA

(Continues)

TABLE 1 | (Continued)

URL	Organisation	Type of info	Target group	Accessibility	Relevance
https://stephenwalshsolicitors.ie/frequently-asked-questions-assisted-decision-making-capacity-act-2015/	Stephen Walsh Solicitors	Informational material	People who may need a decision-making assistant Professional carers Family carers	Some jargon but straightforward Not easy-read	Relevant to understanding ADMA but no practical advice on its application
http://www.ruraldoctors.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/assisted-decision-making-act-factsheet.pdf	Inclusion Ireland	Informational material	Professional carers Family carers	Some jargon but clear Not easy-read	Relevant to understanding ADMA but no practical advice on its application
https://www.smh.ie/assets/files/pdf/easy_to_read_newsletter_-_june_2019_final.pdf	St. Michael's House Disability Services	Informational material	People with ID Family carers Professional carers	Easy-read No jargon, fully explained, disability-friendly	Relevant to helping people with intellectual disabilities understand the ADMA but no practical advice on its application
https://www.hiqa.ie/sites/default/files/2017-01/Supporting-Peoples-Autonomy.pdf	Health Information Quality Authority	Informational material	Professional carers	Jargon explained No easy-read	Informative for policy application in disability services
https://www.fieldfisher.com/en-ie/locations/ireland/ireland-blog/enduring-powers-of-attorney-and-the-end-of-all-or-nothing	Fieldfisher EU law firm	Informational material	Family carers	Jargon-heavy No easy-read	Explains difference between pre- and post-ADMA enduring power of attorney

power of attorney or acute medical decisions such as end-of-life care, with limited consideration of its implications for people with intellectual disabilities and their decision-making supporters in day-to-day life (C. Davies et al. 2019; Flynn 2020; Murphy et al. 2023; Ní Shé et al. 2020).

Research indicates that people often consult the internet for information to seek knowledge of a topic of interest and better understand matters relevant to their lives (Daneback et al. 2012; Slomian et al. 2017). Carers of adults with intellectual disabilities often use the internet to locate support groups, find information on how best to support the person with intellectual disability, or to educate themselves on specific aspects of intellectual disability such as co-occurring medical conditions (Caton et al. 2019). For people with intellectual disabilities, internet usage has historically been limited by accessibility barriers, social exclusion, and carer concerns regarding safety (Chadwick et al. 2022; Chiner et al. 2017). In light of the recent commencement of the ADMA, this raises the question of how much free and accessible information may be available online for people with intellectual disabilities, their family carers, or professional carers living in Ireland in relation to SDM and its applicability to their lives.

The aim of this study, therefore, was to investigate what kinds of online resources are publicly available to people with intellectual disabilities in Ireland and their professional and family carers about SDM and its relevance to their lives and everyday decision-making processes, as well as the quality and accessibility of the information provided (Fortune et al. 2024).

2 | Method

2.1 | Environmental Scan

The environmental scan conducted in the present research followed the methodology used by Leiva Portocarrero et al. (2015) and Mahmoodi et al. (2018). This approach involved combining a Google search with consultation with relevant expert academics and organisations to identify potentially relevant resources, followed by the screening of identified resources using inclusion/exclusion criteria, the extraction of data from those eligible for inclusion, and the use of a quality assessment tool to determine the quality of included resources.

2.2 | Eligibility Criteria

Resources were eligible for inclusion if they: (1) were specifically targeted towards people with intellectual disabilities and/or their professional or family carers; (2) provided information on SDM and/or practical application of the ADMA; and (3) were applicable to their everyday concerns. Resources were excluded if they: (1) were designed for an expert audience (i.e., if they used technical terms or acronyms that would be unfamiliar to a lay audience); (2) focused solely on decision-making in relation to advance care planning, hospital directives, or end of life care; or (3) predated the 2015 signing of the ADMA.

2.3 | Identification of Potentially Eligible Resources

Google Trends was used to determine what phrasing was most popularly used in Ireland when searching for information on SDM and/or the ADMA. Google Trends tracks the frequency with which key words are used in Google searches and can be employed to find out the popularity of search terms over a specified period of time in a specific country (Ajbar et al. 2021; Card et al. 2021; Hassan and Gudiwala 2022). It was found that the term ‘assisted decision-making’ was used more frequently than ‘supported decision-making’ in Google searches performed in Ireland since the introduction of the ADMA in 2015. Dummy searches were then carried out using criteria identified through Google’s own guide for performing the most effective searches using their Chrome web browser (Google 2023). The final search was performed in October 2022 using the following search terms: ‘Assisted Decision Making’ + Ireland. The first 100 results were extracted for screening. A second person (L.C.) performed the same search independently, and results were cross-referenced to identify any that were not present in both searches.

In addition, pertinent national experts and prominent organisations in the area of SDM were identified through reviewing the academic literature or news coverage of the ADMA commencement. Expert sources consulted included: (1) three academic experts in the field of SDM and disability from various Irish universities; (2) the DSS; and (3) Sage Advocacy, a national advocacy service that provides support in self-advocacy for older people and people with cognitive impairments. These sources were contacted via email to ascertain what online resources on SDM and/or the ADMA they had either created or were aware of for relevant stakeholder groups. Five out of six experts responded and provided a total of five such resources. These resources were then combined with the internet search results described previously and duplicates were removed.

2.4 | Screening Process

Stage 1 of the screening process involved reading the home pages of all included resources identified from the combined expert consultation and Google search results and checking their eligibility for inclusion. In Stage 2 of the screening process, all content to which links were provided via the home page of the remaining results was read and checked against the eligibility criteria. Following this more in-depth analysis of the content, additional reasons for exclusion were identified, including the linked content being inaccessible due to the existence of a paywall or a broken link, or providing information for an event or information session that had already taken place. This two-stage process was carried out independently by L.C. and H.C. and a consensus meeting was held to discuss any conflicts and finalise the list of included resources.

2.5 | Data Extraction and Analysis

The application Evernote was used to extract and store the results of the Google search. Evernote is an information

gathering application which allows the user to store web pages, search results, or online information using a cloud-based notebook system. This system allows users to group and categorise information saved, and to add notes or tags to the information for easier understanding and compilation (Van Arnhem 2013). These results were merged with the resources identified by experts to compile a full list to be screened for eligibility. An extraction table was created for the resources selected for inclusion, which included the following categories: (1) the URL of the page, (2) type of information, (3) target group(s), (4) level of accessibility, and (5) relevance to SDM and/or the ADMA (see Table 1).

2.6 | Quality Assessment

The quality of information provided in the included resources was assessed using an adapted version of the Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool (PEMAT; Shoemaker et al. 2014). The PEMAT was designed to review the quality of multi-media sources of health education provided to patients based on how informative, readable, and accessible they would be to a lay audience (Vishnevetsky et al. 2018). The PEMAT allows for the analysis of mixed media resources and assessment using five topics: (1) content, (2) word choice and style, (3) layout and design, (4) use of visual aids, and (5) the actionability of the material. Within these topics, a series of statements relating to the information being assessed are rated using an 'agree/disagree' answer format. An answer of 'agree' indicates the source of information met the quality criteria and the source is thus awarded a score of 1 in that category. An answer of 'disagree' indicates the source of information does not meet the quality criterion, and the source is thus awarded a score of 0 in that category. The PEMAT was selected due to its robust psychometric properties (Shoemaker et al. 2014), inclusion of multi-media forms of communication, and applicability to materials outside of a healthcare context. Furthermore, the PEMAT has been used to assess the accessibility of informational materials for people with intellectual disabilities in previous research (Cannon and Schwartz 2024). To adapt the PEMAT for the purposes of the present research, statements pertaining solely to a medical context, such as calculation of dosage, were omitted, and the actionability and understandability criteria were assessed together to simplify the process. In the modified PEMAT, the highest possible score for text material was 19, and 18 for audiovisual material. The overall accessibility of each resource was converted into a percentage, which served as a total score (see [Supporting Information](#)).

3 | Results

In total, 105 results were obtained from the combined Google search ($n = 100$) and expert consultation ($n = 5$). After duplicates were removed, 101 resources remained. Of these, 67 were excluded following Stage 1 screening. Resources were excluded for the following reasons: not aimed at professional carers, family carers, or people with intellectual disabilities ($n = 58$); made no direct mention of SDM and/or the ADMA ($n = 1$); had no practical advice about SDM and/or the ADMA ($n = 3$);

predated the 2015 signing of the ADMA ($n = 2$); was inaccessible due to a broken link ($n = 2$); was an advertisement for a past event that was not recorded ($n = 1$). Of the remaining 34 resources, 21 were excluded in the second stage of screening for the following reasons: did not provide practical everyday information on SDM and/or the ADMA ($n = 11$); did not provide original content (i.e., linked to other organisations' resources already identified in this scan) ($n = 6$); were behind a paywall or not otherwise publicly accessible ($n = 2$); were designed for an expert audience ($n = 1$); predated the signing of the ADMA in 2015 ($n = 1$).

Thirteen resources were identified for inclusion (see Table 1), which originated from a variety of organisations including the Health Service Executive (HSE), Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), Citizens Information (CI), Inclusion Ireland (II), the Alzheimer's Society of Ireland (ASI), the Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW), the University of Limerick (UL), Family Carers Ireland (FCI), Saint Michael's House disability service (SMH), Stephen Walsh Solicitors (SWS), and Fieldfisher EU law firm (FF). The number of links to additional information provided in each resource ranged from 0 to 6. Modified PEMAT percentages of accessibility ranged from 23.5% to 94.4%. A detailed summary of the contents of each resource, the individual percentages, and the information it linked to can be found in the [Supporting Information](#).

Many of the resources were provided by health and social care organisations (HSE, HIQA, ASI, IASW) for use by professional carers working in disability services who wished to improve their current formal policy or practice in relation to SDM ($n = 4$). Resources aimed at family carers ($n = 4$) focused on how enduring power of attorney or advance care directives could be accessed under the new legislation (FF, SWS, CI, FCI). Only two resources, provided by SMH and II, were tailored towards people with intellectual disabilities and used easy-read, disability-friendly formatting in their documents and audiovisual material, which focused on explaining the concept of SDM and the ADMA. All other resources were not tailored to people with intellectual disabilities, although they attempted to explain technical jargon and avoided using legal language. Seven of the resources (HIQA, CI, II, SMH FCI, UL, ASI) provided links to written materials, many of which were only available in PDF format, rendering them inaccessible to screen readers. Four resources (HSE, II, IASW, FCI) linked to audiovisual materials, all of which were well-executed and included accessibility features such as closed captions, illustrated points using visual aids, and were clearly and concisely narrated, although only II's audiovisual materials were specifically aimed at people with intellectual disabilities. Much of the information provided across the included resources pertained to explaining the ADMA in lay terms, with a focus on how SDM could be applied under the new legislation with the help of the DSS once the Act was fully commenced, or provided explanations relating to key terms such as mental capacity (HSE, IASW, HIQA, SWS, FF, UL, CI). The HIQA document was the only included resource that focused on improving decisional support for people with intellectual disabilities in disability services. It was designed to act as a guide for professional carers at a service policy level to alter their current support policies to better reflect the ADMA and ensure the autonomy of service users was

respected throughout the decision-making process. No other resource identified in this scan offered practical guidance for disability services in this manner.

4 | Discussion

The aim of this environmental scan was to explore the type and quality of information on SDM and/or the ADMA available online to people with intellectual disabilities in Ireland and their decision-making supporters. The environmental scan facilitated this by offering a methodology that could be applied to searching for information in places other than academic databases (Gordon and Glenn 2009; Leiva Portocarrero et al. 2015; Mahmoodi et al. 2018). The results of the scan demonstrate that although information on SDM and/or the ADMA is publicly available in Ireland, it lacks practicality and everyday relevance to people with intellectual disabilities and their decision-making supporters. HIQA was the only organisation that provided a framework designed to improve decisional support for people with intellectual disabilities. However, it was not designed with the entire support circle in mind, as it did not include steps that encouraged the inclusion of family carers in this process. Instead, the focus was on how disability services could embed the framework in their current support policies to align them more directly with the legal obligations set out by the ADMA. Furthermore, no resources were found which explicitly provided training or guidance to carers on how to apply the concept of SDM in everyday decisional support outside of a formal role designated in the Act such as an appointed decision-making assistant, co-decision maker, or decision-making representative, as outlined by the DSS (2023a). The DSS itself, while frequently mentioned in the resources identified, did not have any resources of its own available at the time the scan was conducted, as the Act had not yet been fully commenced. Direct advice was largely limited to specific topics such as advance care planning and enduring power of attorney. However, as demonstrated in a recent systematic review, many of the decisions people with intellectual disabilities require support in making are much more prosaic and less formal (Casey et al. 2025). This indicates that future resources on SDM and/or the ADMA must consider how SDM can play a role in more everyday situations and advise adults with intellectual disabilities and their decision-making supporters on how to apply SDM in such informal circumstances. This suggests a gap in information currently available online for those wishing to understand how SDM might be applied in their lives. Furthermore, given the relatively high cost of producing hard copy materials, this scarcity also is likely to apply to print media also. It should be noted that since the completion of this scan and the commencement of the ADMA, more resources aiding people with intellectual disabilities and their carers in understanding SDM have been made available online, including easy-read materials for people with intellectual disabilities produced by Inclusion Ireland, and a national information campaign by the DSS in partnership with people with intellectual disabilities who act as information ambassadors or ‘champions’ (Inclusion Ireland 2021; Decision Support Service 2023b).

The results of the present study echo those of previous environmental scans highlighting gaps in the provision of

information to stakeholders. For example, a number of scans pertaining to decision-making in healthcare settings have shown that the information available to patients often lacks practical advice for their target audience and instead focuses on conveying general information on the topic at hand (Leiva Portocarrero et al. 2015; Mahmoodi et al. 2018; Rowel et al. 2005; Sacco et al. 2020). In terms of intellectual disability research, previous scans have reported that organisations often fail to explain how their resources and information relate to important aspects of independence and support for people with intellectual disabilities, and require stakeholders to read between the lines to establish these factors for themselves (Brown and Mallett 2021; O’Donovan et al. 2021). An Australian environmental scan focusing on online resources available to people with intellectual disabilities who were being transferred to more independent living accommodation reported that none of the identified websites highlighted how organisations directly enabled a transition to independent living, and instead merely listed the types of living arrangements they offered (O’Donovan et al. 2021). This echoes the findings of the present scan, in which many of the included resources provided definitions of key terms pertaining to SDM and/or the ADMA but did not explain in practical terms how they would affect the lives of the target group. Furthermore, a scan focusing on programmes to facilitate people with intellectual disabilities to find employment reported that such programmes often targeted employers with advice on how they could meet legal requirements for the hiring of people with intellectual disabilities, with fewer programmes designed to assist people with intellectual disabilities directly (Brown and Mallett 2021). This is similar to the findings of the current scan, as most of the resources identified were tailored towards professional carers or organisations rather than people with intellectual disabilities themselves. This suggests that much of the information surrounding access to supports for this cohort fails to consider people with intellectual disabilities themselves as consumers. It is possible that this correlates with the overall difficulties faced by people with intellectual disabilities in accessing online services and reflects the paternalism often evident towards this group more generally (Glencross et al. 2021). Future efforts by Irish disability services should focus on improving the accessibility of information to people with intellectual disabilities by creating resources and practical guides tailored to them specifically, such as *Speak Up, Speak Out*, a training guide on self-advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities designed by Inclusion Ireland in collaboration with self-advocates, which was published after the completion of this scan (Inclusion Ireland 2024). The use of inclusive and participatory codesign approaches in the development of such resources is essential to ensure their accessibility and relevance to people with intellectual disabilities (Petropoulou et al. 2025).

4.1 | Strengths and Limitations of the Research

The primary strength of this environmental scan lies in its novelty in the present research context. It is the only attempt the authors are aware of to establish what sources of information on SDM and/or the ADMA are available to Irish people with intellectual disabilities, and/or their professional and

family carers. It highlights important gaps in the information available online to stakeholders and identifies the lack of accessible resources for people with intellectual disabilities regarding the topic. Furthermore, it identifies current trends in the provision of information by Irish government and disability organisations during a time of great legislative change. Since the scan was completed, the ADMA was fully commenced by the Irish government, changing the volume and content of the information available online. In particular, the growing list of resources now offered by the DSS was not captured here. However, the scan retains its merit through its function as a snapshot of the state of information at a particular time in Ireland, as it attempted to integrate SDM into its legislative process. The examination of online materials only meant that it could not be determined if this scarcity of information translated to print media also, although one could speculate that it likely did given the high cost of hard copy publishing and increasing reliance on the internet for the dissemination of information. Furthermore, people with intellectual disabilities continue to face exclusion from online spaces, which may serve as an explanation for the lack of online materials tailored to them directly. This should be rectified through the creation of more disability-friendly online resources on SDM.

5 | Conclusion

The findings indicate a lack of practical information on SDM and the ADMA for people with intellectual disabilities and their decision-making supporters in Ireland. There is a clear need to integrate the core values and goals of the ADMA into the daily lives of people with intellectual disabilities, as well as their family and professional carers. This could be facilitated through the codesign of accessible resources to support the practical application of the principles of SDM in everyday situations. Providing education and training on SDM could also enhance decision-making support for those involved.

Author Contributions

All authors contributed to the study conceptualization. H.C. and L.C. performed the online searches and resource screening. All authors contributed to draft manuscript preparation, writing, review, and editing. Supervision of the research was performed by D.D. and L.C. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Ethics Statement

The authors have nothing to report.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no data sets were generated or analysed during the current study.

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Supporting Information

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section.
BJLD Supplementary Materials.