



# Care of The Surgical Patient With Learning Difficulties Including Mental Capacity

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## Aims and objectives

- Mental Capacity Act
- Deprivation of Liberty
- Patient Preparation
- Capacity Assessment
- Best Interest
- Day of admission
- Going to Theatre
- Post Op
- Looking forward



# What is the mental capacity act?

- The Mental Capacity Act for England and Wales  
**April 2005**

The Mental Capacity Act is designed to protect people who can't make decisions for themselves or lack the mental capacity to do so. This could be due to a [mental health condition](#), a severe [learning disability](#), a [brain injury](#), a [stroke](#) or unconsciousness due to an anaesthetic or sudden accident

<http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/moneyandlegal/legal/Pages/MentalCapacityAct.aspx>



# Independent Mental Capacity Advocates

## Introduction of Independent Mental Capacity Advocates (IMCAs) April 2007

An IMCA safeguards the rights of people who:

- are facing a decision about a long-term move or about serious medical treatment;
- lack capacity to make a specified decision at the time it needs to be made
- have nobody else who is willing and able to represent them or be consulted in the process of working out their best interests, other than paid staff.

The act applies to people aged 16 and over who may lack capacity



# Capacity Assessment

1. **Each assessment is decision specific**
  - Be as clear and concise as possible about decision to be made
2. **Who has been consulted?**
  - Make sure relatives / meaningful others and any disciplines involved with the patient are consulted as part of the process
3. **What support has been provided for the individual?**
  - Information presented in an accessible format such as providing information in a simplified format, pictures or via an appropriate interpreter. This must be carried out more than once
4. **The type of impairment or disturbance to functioning of the brain**
  - Temporary
  - Permanent
  - Fluctuating
5. **Deprivation of Liberty or DOLs**
  - If a patient is staying more than 48 hours in a hospital setting such as an ITU setting an emergency DOLs order needs to be applied for.



# Examples of patient specific information

## Why does Jackie need an operation on her heart?

Jackie has a hole in her heart and this is making her heart work too hard



This means Jackie can't walk as far as she used to



## When I come for my operation

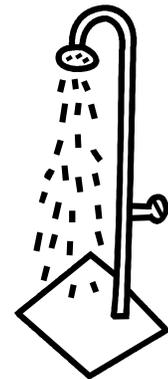
I will come into hospital the day before my operation and Sally can come with me



Sally or a nurse will use the clipper to take the hair off from under my arms, my arms and the tops of my legs



I will have a shower



Understand? Retain? Weigh?  
Communicate?



# Patient Preparation

Process  
not one  
off event

Facebook

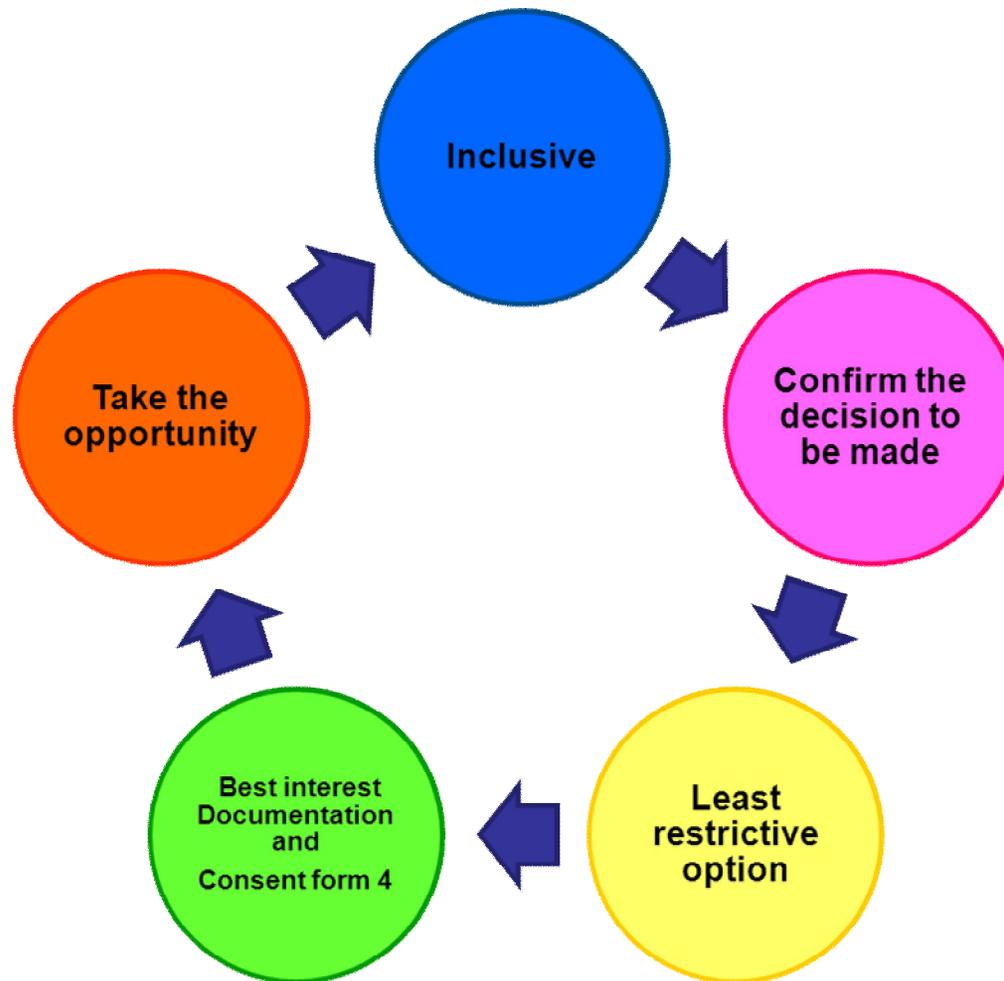
Team  
Approach



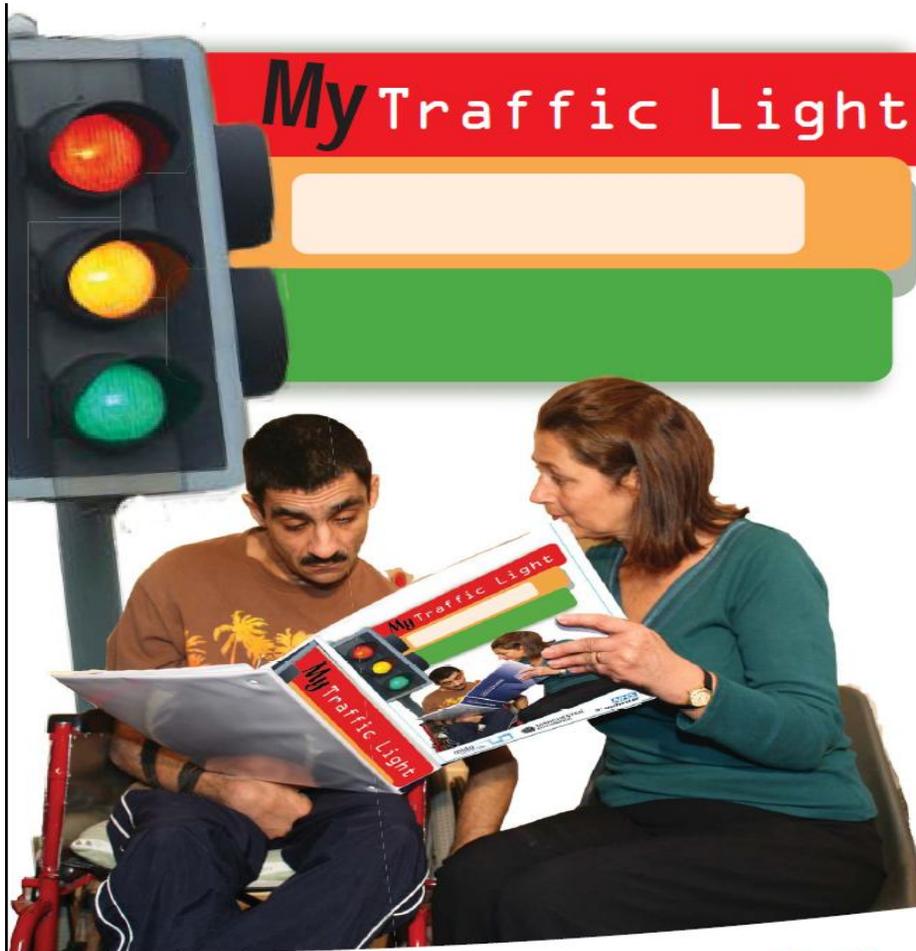
Patient-  
focused  
information

Visits

# Best Interest



# Passport



- Its useful to ask family or carers to fill this in before admission
- The traffic light document travels with the patient through their stay in hospital as an aid to communication.



## Day of Admission

Cascade Information to all departments

- **Cardiac Liaison**
- **Ward**
- **Theatres / Anaesthetist**
- **Intensive care**
- **Physiotherapists**

Provide patient, family or carers with information

- **Ring at 09.00**
- **Local Hotels**
- **Ronald McDonald House**
- **Car parking**
- **Friendly face**

# Going to Theatre

- Ensure there is a supply of “Magic” cream if the patient wants it.
- Negotiate with Anaesthetist for relative or carer to accompany the patient to theatre.
- Support patient and relative in anaesthetic room and have a ready supply of tissues.
- Ensure relative / carer is ok and ensure they have contact details for ITU and ACHD Specialist Nurses.
- Remind staff on ITU that patient has learning disabilities and provide contact details so that relative / carer can be present in ITU when patient is waking up.
- Relative / carer encouraged to stay with patient in ITU to provide support.
- DON'T forget .....





## Post op

- Assess effect of analgesia on an individual basis, don't make assumptions
- Compliance to physiotherapy
- Encourage early mobilisation
- Plan for discharge,
  1. Where is the patient going post discharge?
  2. Who is going to support the patient when they get home?
  3. Educate regarding does and don'ts in the post op period.



## Looking Forward

- Encourage the patient to go for a walk at least twice a day, increasing the distance walked each day
- Patients can return to normal activities as tolerated, let them take the lead
- Refer for cardiac rehab
- Life long follow up.



### **“Jane you need to pout on a selfie”**

Emma asked to take a selfie on her phone when we visited the intensive care unit prior to her surgery and she shared it with me on Facebook when she got home and asked if she could book the lilac coloured bed space when she has her operation.

**Thank you for listening, any  
questions?**



## References

- <http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/moneyandlegal/legal/Pages/MentalCapacityAct.aspx>
- I'm gonna go for it  
British Heart Foundation DVD 20
- Sammy's heart operation  
British Heart foundation M83
- Operation Fix it  
British Heart Foundation M82