

Request title: Patient's best interests

Date of Response: 20th August 2015

Further to your Freedom of Information request, the Trust has answered your questions in the order they appear in your request.

Request

When a person has lost capacity, what is the policy for deciding what is in their best interests? Is it done by votes or by a Consultant looking at all the issues and views of interested parties, eg; what is the process involved and who ultimately decides what is in the persons best interests?

Please send me any practice guidelines and a statement of how this process takes place.

When an antibiotic is prescribed which cannot be given with food, what arrangements are made within the Trust to ensure appropriate delivery of medication, please send a copy of any guidance etc and a statement of common practice.

Reply:

Further to your Freedom of Information request, the Trust has answered your questions in the order they appear in your request.

The Trust does not have a separate mental capacity policy but follows the Mental capacity Act 2005 code of practice (2007). If a patient lacks capacity to make a decision, then a 'best interest' decision is made. This may involve consulting family, friends, other professionals both outside and within the hospital, as well as taking into account the patients views both past and present. If a patient has no family or friends to represent their views, then the staff may consult an Independent mental capacity advocate.

For any medicine, not just antibiotics, that has specific administration requirements e.g. not with food, after food, avoid food for 30 minutes after administered, the pharmacy staff would add this guidance onto the patients medication administration record card against the relevant medicine. This would be visible to anyone administering medicines to the patient. It should be recognised however that it is not always possible for the guidance to be followed in every patient's situation for many clinical and operational reasons.