

Development of the Mental Capacity Assessment Support Toolkit (MCAST)

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Project method

The toolkit was designed to support hospital staff to carry out high quality mental capacity assessments and identify and support the needs of patients with communication difficulties. An iterative, user-centred design methodology was adopted. Literature reviews were completed relating to: i) current mental capacity assessment practice; ii) inclusive communication methods. Data about local capacity assessment practice and staff support needs were collected from 13 health and social care staff from 7 disciplines in two focus groups. Data were analysed thematically using Framework. The initial toolkit specification was based on these data. A prototype was developed iteratively in collaboration with hospital staff, people with communication disorders and design experts. Content validity was examined by asking experts in capacity assessment and communication disorders to review the tool's content. Face validity and usability were investigated by inviting staff to trial the tool with people with communication disorders.

Project results/evaluation

A toolkit is designed to enable staff to: i) prepare, carry out and record capacity assessments; ii) identify patients with communication difficulties and support their needs. Data indicate the prototype has strong face and content validity. Further testing will establish the tool's reliability, validity, usability and acceptability to patients.

Project area classification

Hospital care	x	Emergency care	x
GP care		Dementia	x
Social care		Learning disability	
Voluntary sector		Other mental health	
Financial services		Palliative care	x
Police		Advance planning, LPAs	
Legal		Commissioning	
Community health care	x	Training	x
Nursing and care home	x	For professionals?	x
Acute care	x	For public and service users?	
Chronic care	x		