

# Exploring the Mental Capacity Act with dementia studies students

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## Project method

This project in progress involves work with undergraduate dementia studies students over several modules. Almost all of our students are healthcare practitioners, representing a diversity of role types (e.g. care assistants, care home managers, physical therapists, mental health nurses, general nurses), all of whom come into some contact with people who are living with dementia in their professional roles. This student group is unique in having a link to application of the MCA from the point of assessment through to end of life care. Whilst this legislation is directly relevant to their work, we find that there remains room for fuller comprehension of the policy (e.g. understanding related to fluctuating capacity or the role of consultees in best interest decisions). We are currently in the progress of embedding an exploration of the MCA into our course modules, with particular focus on capacity assessments and best interest decisions, as a way to support students in fully understanding the Act and how it should be applied in practice. It is clear that translating policy into practice is often a challenging process, and we hope that by exploring this with students we are contributing to this translation. Given that our student groups are communities of practice, bringing various expertise to the group, there is also potential for student-to-student learning through discussion in this area.

## Project results/evaluation

The efficacy of this project will be explored in the module review process with students, who are asked to provide feedback about education delivery after every module they study with us. There will be a specific question related to this aspect of delivery and potential for follow-up discussion/feedback.

## Project area classification

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