

Ophthalmology surgery in relation to a patient's Mental Capacity and Best Interests Decision

Julie Hall Adult Safeguarding Lead, Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Badrul Hussain Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Julie.hall@moorfields.nhs.uk

Project method

Moorfields Eye Hospital see approximately 0.75 million patients per year, undertake 36,000 operations and 30,000 injections. The majority of the patients are over 70. From this calculation of the numbers there would be one or two patients per day in large clinics with dementia. The flow chart was devised following a review of the current process which identified that some patients who did not have mental capacity were incurring longer waiting time than patients who did have mental capacity. The patient's eye sight during this time could have potentially deteriorated and caused further concerns for them. A similar pathway had been adopted previously however it had not been formalised which led to differing practices and most areas adopting a best interest meeting for almost all patients deemed not to have capacity which was the cause of the delay.

Project results/evaluation

The new flow chart attached clearly sets out the care pathway for patients requiring ophthalmic surgery who do not have mental capacity. When this care pathway was used informally it speeded up the process for patients and allowed their eye condition to be managed with a more pragmatic approach balancing the requirements of the MCA as well as the need for, sometimes, urgent surgery to improve quality of life and mental wellbeing - empirical evidence suggests that for patients with impairment in mental functioning, improvement in vision may help in rehabilitation.

Project area classification

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