

# Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards role-play

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## Project method

To be able to assess a person's capacity, both knowledge about the theoretical and legal background and gaining practical skills through shadowing and supervision are paramount.

Although assessing cognitive functioning is widespread amongst health and social care practitioners, when it comes to mental capacity, many shy away. There still seems to be a general anxiety about this topic.

Role-play enables clinicians to bring situations to life, put themselves in the patients' shoes or just rehearse for a real event. When I utilised my own relevant case studies and pretended to be a patient, employing the patient's verbal and non-verbal responses provided a safe place for clinicians to explore the subtle differences, enabling patient's participation and the difficulties in reaching a decision.

The key to this type of exercise was to keep it very simple and to encourage and motivate staff to fully engage with mental capacity process.

## Project results/evaluation

Through the process a realisation emerged that staff already asking the right questions but do not necessary thinking about the mental capacity framework.

As a result of the exercise, the number of DoLS applications has also increased significantly:

2013-14: 2; 2014-15: 14; 2015-2016: 50

## 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	x
Nursing and care home		For professionals?	
Acute care		For public and service users?	
Chronic care			