

CONSENT: patients and doctors making decisions together – consultation questions

Questions 1

Yes guidance is relevant

Comment Guidance is broad but seems to encompass all scenarios – however practice may reveal some situations outside these parameters.

Question 2

Yes the principles are correct

Comment The emphasis is on partnership and care needs to be taken to address the different levels of understanding that may accrue and the reluctance of the patient to admit to a lack of understanding.

Question 3

Yes the differing roles are reflected in the draft.

Comment The role of advocacy might have been relevant at this stage and where the patient's understanding leads them to accept or refuse treatment, notes should be kept, **and agreed** to protect both the doctor and the patient.

Question 4

Yes the guidance clearly expresses the doctors obligations to provide relevant information.

Comment This is a difficulty if the doctor is unable to provide the treatment as it can represent a damage to the confidence of the patient in the doctor

Question 5

It is reasonable to expect doctors to try

Comment It is reasonable to expect doctors to try and reach some informed decision with their patient but handling the presentation of the information may require extra skills in some cases or again the services of a trusted advocate.

Question 6

It is reasonable for the doctor, as the expert in the field to be aware of “more effective treatments”

Comment It is very important that the doctor is up to date with all treatments, whether available or not in the area so that the patient is well informed re the options and can make a considered decision. The difficulty with the possible enhanced expectations of the patient also needs to be addressed and the consequent loss of confidence if the expectation exceeds the outcome.

Question 7

Yes

Comment Patients depend on the doctor as the expert in the field to assess the merits of treatments

Question 8

Yes

Comment Again patients must have whatever information is available

Question 9

Yes

Comment Patients need time to reflect on the info and advice given and need space to assess the outcomes and risks before consent is given to a treatment.

Question 10

No

Comment This tenet should be overriding all the guidance and should be awarded a much more prominent place in the overall publication.

Question 11

No

Comment As before

Question 12

Yes

Comment While it is understandable that some patients which to distance themselves from the process, nevertheless doctors must, for their own protection at least make the patient aware of the details pertaining to their condition as the management of it will involve partnership.

Question 13

Yes

Question 14

Yes

Question 15

Yes

Comment The effects of non-intervention is not clearly identified as a risk

Question 16

Yes

Comment This is well covered and most important for the patient to be aware of the “what if” factor

Question 17

Yes

Comment The only difficulty not fully explored is advocacy v. confidentiality

Question 18

No

Comment As before

Question 19

Yes

Comment This is part of the partnership between patient (and/or carers) and doctor

Question 20

No

Question 21

Yes

Comment

Some credence could be given to a care journey, updated and evaluated regularly to keep pace with a changing situation.

Question 22

Yes

Comment

Guidance is clearly stated or other relevant publications cited.

Question 23

Yes

Comment

None

Question 24

Yes

Comment

None

Question 25

No

Comment

None

Question 26

Yes

Comment

Advocacy relevant to this section and the suggestion in para.61 is very helpful

Question 27

No

Comment

None

Question 28

No

Comment

None

Question 29

Yes

Comment The differences in legislation are difficult to address but it is important to keep up to date with the current legal situation

Question 30

Yes

Comment None

Question 31

No

Comment None

Question 32

Yes

Comment None

Question 33

No

Comment None

Question 34

No

Comment None

Question 35

Yes

Comment The use of advocacy to reach the requisite levels of understanding might have more prominent positioning.

Question 36

No

Comment None

Question 37

No

Comment None

Question 38

Comment A very forward looking document with a great degree of clarity and an underlying intent to involve the patient in a greater degree of partnership in the managing of condition. This environment should in turn lead to a greater degree of understanding, a lesser dependence on “old wives’ tales” and a more confident approach alleviating the stress to both patient and doctor

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