



# Patient Information Service

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## Understanding consent and capacity



Southend University Hospital



NHS Foundation Trust

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## Understanding consent and capacity



This means saying yes or no.



Some decisions are very important.



Like choosing where to live.



Should I have an operation at hospital?



Capacity is having the skills to make choices.



Do you understand the choice you need to make?



The law says anybody over 16 can make their own choices.



Unless we find out they are unable.



We will work hard to help you understand choices before we say you do not understand.

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## Helping you make important choices



We will spend time with you explaining things.



We can get support from people who know you well.



We can use pictures, photos and easy read to help you understand.

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## To give consent you must be able to



Understand the information about the choice.



Remember the information long enough to make the choice.



Think about what is best for you.



Communicate your choice. You can give consent in different ways.



You can do something to show you agree.



You can say you agree.



You can sign a form if you agree.



You can ask questions about the choice you need to make.



You have the right to have your say about your healthcare and treatment.

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## What if you cannot understand the choice?



If you cannot make the choice yourself other people will need to help make a decision in your best interest.



If you are 16 or over other people cannot usually choose for you.



They can only do this if the law says they can.



Every time you need to make a new choice or decision your capacity may be assessed again.

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## What are best interests?



It is important you have the help and treatment you need to stay healthy.



This can be things like having a blood test.



Having an operation.



People may agree that these are the best thing for your health.





People cannot decide for you just because they do not agree with you.



If you cannot make an important choice yourself everybody Involved will have a best interest talk. This includes you.



If you do not have any family or an advocate we can ask for an independent mental capacity advocate to help you.



They can help if your choice is about serious medical treatment or changing where you live.



At the meeting you will talk about;



If it is best you have the treatment.



The best way to have the treatment so you are as safe and happy as you can be.



Helping you get better afterwards.

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## For further help you can contact



The specialist learning disability nurse.



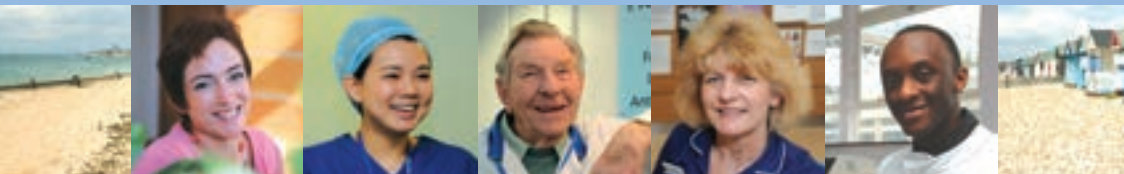
**01702 435555 ext 6448.**



Or see our website pages for people with learning disabilities.



[www.southend.nhs.uk](http://www.southend.nhs.uk)



# Patient Information Service

If this leaflet does not answer all of your questions, or if you have any other concerns please contact the learning disabilities nurse specialist on: **01702 435555 ext 6448**.

[www.southend.nhs.uk](http://www.southend.nhs.uk)

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For a translated, large print or audio tape version of this document please contact:

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

**Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**

**Prittlewell Chase**

**Westcliff-on-Sea**

**Essex, SS0 0RY**

**Telephone: 01702 385333**

**Fax: 01702 508530**

**Email: pals@southend.nhs.uk**

Written by Sarah Haines  
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Southend University Hospital   
NHS Foundation Trust