

CARD 8

Determining 'best interests'

1 What factors should be taken into account when considering what is in a patient's best interests?

A number of factors should be addressed including:

- the patient's own wishes and values (where these can be ascertained), including any advance decision
- clinical judgement about the effectiveness of the proposed treatment, particularly in relation to other options
- where there is more than one option, which option is less restrictive of the patient's future choices
- the likelihood and extent of any degree of improvement in the patient's condition if treatment is provided
- the views of the parents, if the patient is a child
- the views of people close to the patient, especially close relatives, partners, carers, welfare attorneys, court-appointed deputies or guardians about what the patient is likely to see as beneficial; and
- any knowledge of the patient's religious, cultural and other non-medical views that might have an impact on the patient's wishes.

(See also Card 1 list: 'Consent', 'DoH', '0-18 years', 'Children', 'Capacity', 'Scotland', 'MCA', 'MET', 'MDU', 'MPS'.)