

Adult Social Care Understanding Mental Capacity

What is a Mental Capacity Assessment?



Coventry City Council

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COVENTRY

○ What is a Mental Capacity Assessment?

A Mental Capacity Assessment shows if someone has mental capacity to make;

- **a particular decision**
- **at a particular time**

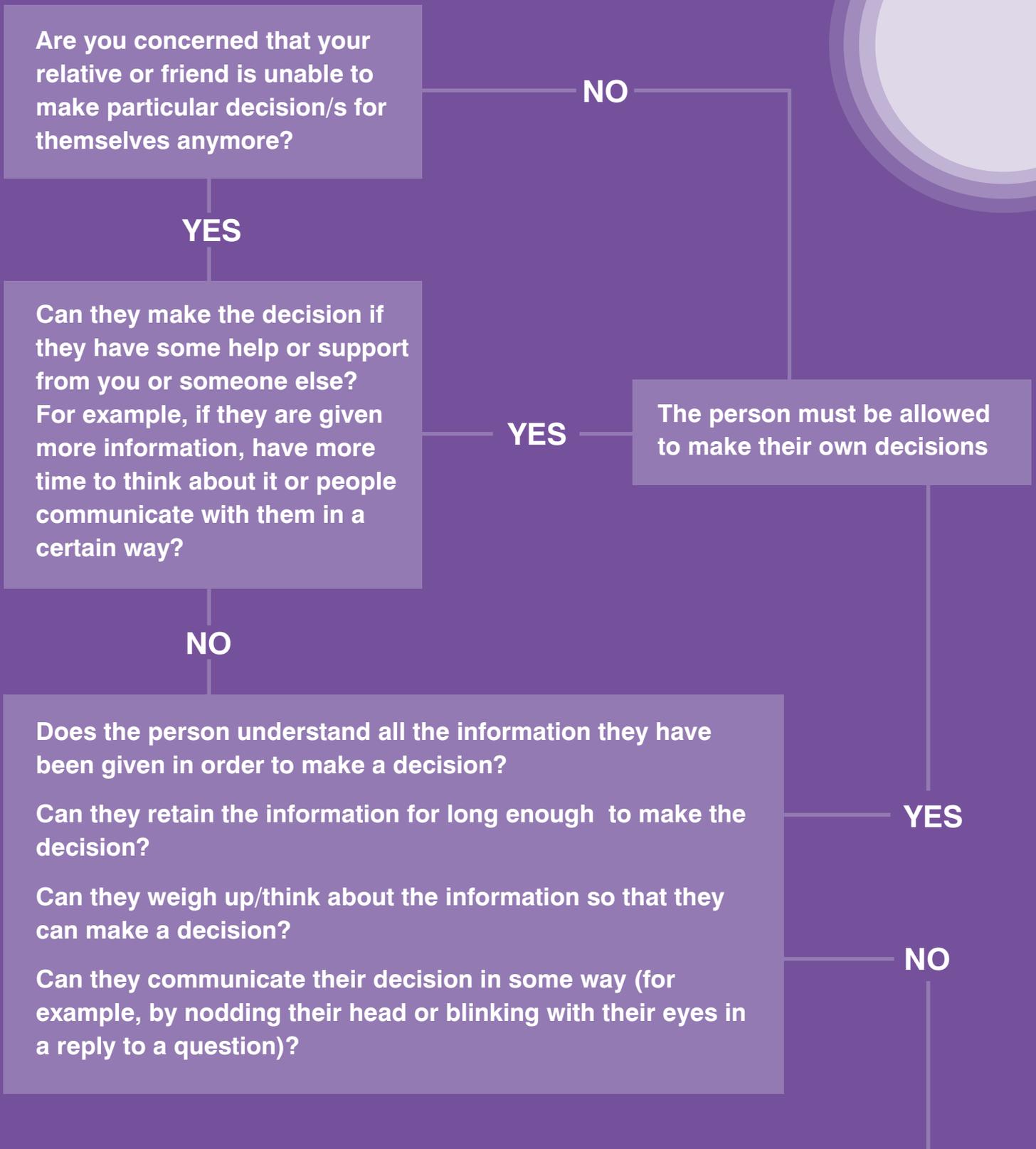
It is not a single assessment that applies to all decisions at all times.

It need not always be a professional that carries out the assessment and makes the decision.

For most day to day things it will be the family, friends and carers who assess the persons capacity.

If there is a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) in place that covers the decision being made, the LPA will be the assessor and the decision maker. A professional can help the LPA undertake the capacity assessment if asked to do so.





If for this particular decision at this time, the person lacks the mental capacity to make the decision, someone will have to make it for them.

For every day decisions, such as what to wear or what to eat, a carer or relative can make the decision for them.

For more complicated decisions, such as medical treatment, a health or social care professional may become involved.

When someone makes an unwise decision or one that others disagree with, it does not mean they lack mental capacity

○ What to expect during an Assessment?

Before the Assessment

Professionals. If the decision to be made involves a professional they will contact the person being assessed to arrange the best time and place to do the assessment. They will also consider the best language to use and the best way to communicate so that this can be arranged before the meeting. This is where carers, family and friends can be really useful. By law, the person being assessed must be given the best chance of showing they can make the decision.

Time. Sometimes a person may have good times and bad times so they may be visited or assessed more than once in order to give them the best chance to make their own decision.

Peoples mental capacity can vary; for example, a person's ability to make a decision about something now may not be the same as in a few weeks' time. If the decision needs to be made urgently (for example, to be admitted to hospital) the assessor will have to go with what they are presented with at the time, but a more thorough assessment must be done once the person is safe.

Who can be at the Assessment?

The assessor will ask the person being assessed if they would like someone to support them. This could be their main carer or other family and friends. If the person being assessed says no (and they have the capacity to say no) then the assessor must abide by their wishes. This does not stop the assessor from speaking to the family to get more information.

Even when carers, family and friends are involved in the assessment, the assessor may still have a private conversation with the person. If there are a number of people involved in supporting the person being assessed, it is better to nominate one or two people to be involved in the capacity assessment itself as the assessor will not be able to talk to lots of people.



○ What happens during the Assessment?

A mental capacity assessment is not a memory test, a statement of a person's ability to make decisions in the future nor is it used for scoring care needs.

It is about making a particular decision here and now.

The assessor will have thought about the basic things a person with mental capacity would be expected to understand in relation to the decision that is being made. Carers, family and friends can help prepare for the assessment by thinking about the decision and giving any information to the assessor they feel might be useful.

To decide whether the person has the mental capacity to make the decision at this time the assessor must check that the person is able to do all of the following:

- 1. Understand that there is a decision to be made;**
- 2. Retain or remember information given to them about the decision to be made;**
- 3. Weigh up or think about the information and what the options or choices are in relation to the decision;**
- 4. Communicate their decision to the assessor in whatever way they can.**

Recording and Sharing Information

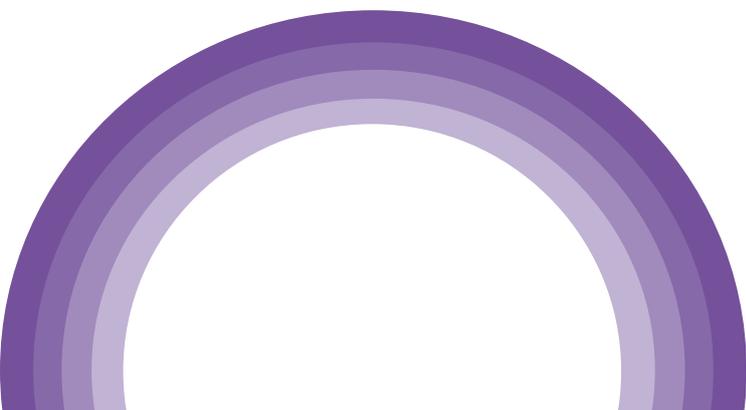
Day to day decisions will be recorded in a care and support plan.

More formal decisions will be recorded on the person's medical or social care records.

Once a mental capacity decision has been made it may be changed if the situation changes or if new information is received.

Doing a mental capacity assessment means that information may need to be shared with others. If a person lacks the mental capacity to consent to share information, information can be shared as long as this is in the person's best interests. Only as much information as is necessary should be shared.

Health and Welfare Lasting Power of Attorneys (LPA) can decide whether information can be disclosed on behalf of the person (called the donor). They should normally be consulted before any information is shared. Where it is not possible to consult them (for example, where urgent treatment is necessary) staff must act in the person's best interests and advise the LPA of actions taken as soon as is practicable.



o Contact Adult Social Care Direct

Call **024 7683 3003**

or email ascdirect@coventry.gov.uk

or visit www.coventry.gov.uk/health-social-care

Speech impairment, deaf or hard of hearing?
You can call using Next Generation Text (also known as
Text Relay and TypeTalk): **18001 024 7683 3003**

If you require this information in another language or format,
please email ascdirect@coventry.gov.uk

Jeśli potrzebujesz zawartych informacji w innym języku lub formacie, prosimy o wiadomość e-mail na adres
ascdirect@coventry.gov.uk

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Dacă aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-o altă limbă sau format, vă rugăm trimiteți email la:
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