

Case studies and Skills I -- 26 September 2009

Case study 1.1

Patient's son seeks your opinion – the father can manage his daily affairs but not able to handle finances of more complex nature

- Mr James Tan sees you as a family doctor to discuss about his father, Mr Thomas Tan. He would like to check if his father has mental capacity.
- Mr Thomas Tan, who is a retired school teacher, has made and registered a lasting power of attorney (LPA) which allows his son to manage his property and financial affairs if he ever lacks the capacity to manage these himself.
- When James went shopping with the father last week he seemed quite capable of finding his usual groceries and made sure he got the right change.
- However, when they got home and James raised the subject of his investments and some decisions that needed to be made, his father got very confused. Yesterday, James tried to explain some simple investment options to him, he seems to have very little understanding and became quite upset. This is quite uncharacteristic of his father as he has been quite comfortable making such decisions in the past.

Q1 What is the trigger event for asking for an assessment of mental capacity?

Q2. What advice would you give the son?

Q3. What discussion, if any would you like to discuss with the father?

Case study 1.2

Caregiver is concerned about what is less restrictive action of the patient's rights and freedom

- Miss Salmah has a mother who has mild to moderate dementia. She is at times restless and would get up and wander out of the house into the garden.
- Miss Salmah is the main caregiver. She is the welfare attorney of the mother under a LPA.
- Miss Salmah wonders what is the best way to restrain her from these wandering acts. She is afraid she will fall or may even get out of the house unnoticed.
- Now, Miss Salmah has a step-sister who is quite critical of her ideas of restraining the mother and says that she will report to the police should the sister does anything of that sort.

Q1 What is the difference if any between restraint and deprivation of freedom?

Q2. What are the less restrictive options that you will advise her to implement?

Q3. What is the legal protection that she will have as a caregiver should the step-sister decides to make a complaint?

Case study 1.3

GP notes that his patient who has mental disability has bruises

- Mr Joseph, aged 45-years-old is a patient with mental disability under your care. He has hypertension and he sees you once every three months for follow-up.
- He stays at home and is looked after by his cousin Michael, who is his main caregiver and welfare attorney under an IPA.
- Now, Michael has complained several times that his cousin's behaviour is "challenging" and that he is "stubborn".
- Today, you notice bruises on the arms of Joseph.

Q1. What are your thoughts and how would you confirm your suspicion?

Q2. What action if any, would you take?

Q3. Would you tell Michael anything?

Case studies and Skills II -- 27 September 2009

Case study 2.1

Mother wants to have a mental capacity assessment done for her child with intellectual disability because she wants the court to appoint her as a welfare deputy for the child

- Mrs Fatimah Ahmad wants a mental capacity assessment done for her child who has intellectual disability, because she wants the court to appoint her as a welfare deputy for the child.
- Her child is now 22 years old. He had birth asphyxia and has cerebral palsy.
- He is presently ADL dependent requiring assistance for feeding, bathing, grooming and toileting.
- Mrs Fatimah Ahmad also wishes to appoint a successor deputy to her to take care of her child when she is “no longer around”.
- She also wants to know what are the decisions that she cannot make on behalf of her child

Q1. What is the trigger event and what is the task to be accomplished?

Q2. How would you go about the task?

Q3. What are the excluded decisions on behalf of the son that you would want to tell Mrs Fatimah Ahmad?

Case study 2.2

Patient's son wants a mental capacity assessment of the father done because he is not able to look after his affairs

- *Mr William Lim wants a mental capacity assessment of the father, Mr John Lim, done because he is not able to look after his affairs*
- *His father loves to gamble and the family has discovered that the father has lost large sums of money in the last one month. This has never happened before.*
- *William, being the youngest in the family, has been tasked by the family to bring the father to come and see you.*

Q1. What is the trigger event and what is the task to be accomplished?

Q2. How would you go about the task?

Q3. What would you tell the son and the father, if anything?

Case study 2.3

Mr Ong is brought by the daughter to see her family doctor for a mental capacity assessment because he has a fluctuating memory over the last 6 months.

- *Mr Ong who is 65 years old is brought by the daughter to see his family doctor for a mental capacity assessment because he has fluctuating memory over the last 6 months*
- *He is usually better in the morning.*
- *The family doctor concludes that he has early dementia and Parkinsonism and that he would like to refer him to a specialist colleague for confirmation*
- *The daughter asks the doctor on how the court can appoint her to be a deputy to look after her father's financial affairs*

Q1. What is the trigger event and what is the task to be accomplished?

Q2. How would the family doctor go about the task of referring the father to see a specialist colleague?

Q3. What is your reply to the daughter's question on how she can be appointed by the court as a deputy?