What is consent?

Consent is the process by which you give permission to health professionals to provide your care and treatment. It may be implied (offering your arm for a blood pressure reading) or formal (signing a formal consent form for an operation).

For the purpose of this leaflet, the word ‘procedure’ used throughout also covers courses of treatment and medical tests.

In either case your consent must be given voluntarily and you must have all the information you need to make a decision. This includes what the procedure involves, the benefits and risks, the details of any alternative procedures and what would happen if the procedure does not go ahead.

How do I give consent?

Consent is a two way process between you and a health professional. It is a chance for you to ask any questions, and for the health professional to explain what your procedure will involve.

You may give consent to the proposed course of action non-verbally, for example by offering your arm for a blood test. In more complex cases, consent will be recorded on a consent form. The form enables the health professional to record the different aspects involved in consent and allows you to sign to show you agree.

The form alone does not prove consent but it does confirm your joint discussion.

Where a child or young person cannot give consent for themselves, someone with parental responsibility must sign the form on their behalf. There is a separate form for an adult patient who lacks capacity to give consent. Please ask your health professional for advice and for further information.

Explaining the consent form

The procedure: benefits, risks and alternatives

Your health professional will explain the procedure to you, in particular the intended benefits of the procedure, the risks involved, any available alternatives and the alternative of not having the procedure.

You may be offered an information leaflet about your procedure. Most of our leaflets are also available online at www.cuh.org.uk/patientinformation

Where applicable, we will also offer you a copy of the consent form to read in advance of your procedure. If you have not had a copy, please ask us.

Important things you need to know

Patient choice is an important part of your care. You have the right to change your mind at any time, even after you have given consent, and even if the procedure has started (as long as it is safe and practical to do so).

If you are having an anaesthetic, you will have the opportunity to discuss this with the anaesthetist, unless the urgency of your procedure prevents this.

We will also only carry out the procedure on your consent form, unless in the opinion of the health professional responsible for your care, a further procedure is needed in order to save your life or prevent serious harm to your health. However, there may be procedures you do not wish us to carry out and these can be recorded on the consent form.

We are unable to guarantee that a particular person will perform the procedure. However, the person undertaking the procedure will have the relevant experience.

All information we hold about you is stored under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

1 Creutzfeldt Jakob Disease (‘CJD’)

We must take special measures with hospital instruments if there is a possibility you have been at risk of CJD or variant CJD disease. We therefore ask all patients undergoing any surgical procedure if they have been told that they...
are at increased risk of either of these forms of CJD. This helps prevent the spread of CJD to the wider public.
A positive answer will not stop your procedure taking place, but enables us to plan your operation to minimise any
risk of transmission to other patients.

2 Photography, Audio or Visual Recordings
As a leading teaching hospital we take great pride in our research and staff training. We ask for your permission to
use images and recordings for your diagnosis and treatment, they will form part of your medical record. We also ask
for your permission to use these images for audit and in training medical and other healthcare staff and UK medical
students; you do not have to agree and if you prefer not to, this will not affect the care and treatment we provide.
We will ask for your separate written permission to use any images or recordings in publications or research.

3 Medical Training
Training doctors and other health professionals is essential to the NHS. Your treatment may provide an important
opportunity for such training, where necessary under the careful supervision of a registered professional.
You may, however, prefer not to take part in the formal training of medical and other students without this
affecting your care and treatment.

4 Use of Tissue
As a leading bio-medical research centre and teaching hospital, we may be able to use tissue removed as part of
your treatment, but not required for your diagnosis. We may also request you to donate a 10ml blood sample (2
teaspoons), that would not otherwise be taken, for research. Any such research, or storage or disposal of tissue, will
be carried out in accordance with ethical, legal and professional standards. In order to carry out such research we
need your consent. We only seek your consent for research approved by the National Research Ethics Service. You do
not have to consent, and if you prefer not to, this will not in any way affect the care and treatment we provide. If you
agree to the research use of your surplus tissues, we will also ask if you wish to be informed if your samples reveal
genetic information that might affect you and your family. The leaflet ‘Donating tissue or cells for research’ gives
more detailed information. Please ask for a copy.
If you wish to withdraw your consent on the use of tissue (including blood) for research, please contact our Patient
Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), on 01223 216756. However, your anonymised tissues may be used for quality
control, teaching, and health surveillance purposes without your consent according to the Human Tissue Act (2004).

5 Genetic testing
If you are having a procedure involving a sample (biopsy) being taken, a range of tests may be performed on
this sample to obtain the best possible understanding of your underlying condition. Genetic testing refers to
tests that are performed on material such as DNA, which is extracted from the biopsy and can provide information
that guides the diagnosis, prognosis or treatment of the condition for which you have had the biopsy. Very
occasionally, this genetic testing could identify additional unexpected information relating to your health, or about
genetic conditions that could have important implications for you and other family members. This information would
be given to you by one of the health professionals in the team looking after you or a clinician in the Department of
Medical Genetics. If you do not wish genetic testing to be performed on your biopsy sample, please discuss this with
your health professional.

Consent form
Signed consent forms are kept with your medical records. If you would like a copy, please ask your health professional.

Privacy and Dignity
We are committed to treating all patients with privacy and dignity in a safe, clean and comfortable environment.
This means, with a few exceptions, we will care for you in same sex bays in wards with separate sanitary facilities for
men and women.

No Smoking Policy
We are now a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site. For advice and support in
quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169