

Ethical decisions at the end of life in dementia care

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Dementia

- A fatal illness (?)
- Death due to complications?
- Death due to 'old age'?

Death

Specific ethical issues

- Consent
- Capacity
- Information-sharing
- Futility
- Ordinary and extraordinary means
- Artificial nutrition and hydration
- Euthanasia
- Advance care planning

Medical ethics

- Competence
- Compassion
- Non-abandonment

Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners

- Medical Council of Ireland 2009

Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners

- Non-medical majority
- Plain English mark-approved by NALA

1 General Principles

- Integrity, compassion
- Sensitive attitude
- Good judgement and sound clinical advice
- Best evidence
- Continuous improvement

5 Dignity of the patient

- Including patients with disabilities, lack of consent

19 Nutrition and Hydration

- Basic needs
- Orally
- Alternate means which are possible and appropriate
- Burdens
- Risks
- Patient's wishes

22 End of Life Care

- Assisting patients, families and community in dealing with the reality of death
- Take care that the patient dies with dignity, in comfort and with as little suffering as possible
- No obligation for futile treatment, including ANH
- Patient's right to refuse
- Clear communication about what can and cannot be achieved
- Not participate in deliberate killing



Irish Association for Palliative Care

PALLIATIVE SEDATION

Discussion Paper



Irish Association for Palliative Care

ARTIFICIAL HYDRATION IN TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS

Position Paper

26 Disclosure with patient's consent to relatives and carers

- Need consent, except risk of serious harm
- If patient cannot consent, consider best interests

34 Capacity to Consent

- Assume capacity
- Respect dignity and integrity
- Functional approach
- Where patient does not have capacity
 - best clinical benefit
 - past and present wishes
 - views of others who may be familiar with preferences, beliefs and values

41 Advance Care Planning

Conclusion

- Ethics-that good should be done, and harm avoided
- The importance of being well informed and up to date
- Crisis usually avoidable, but decision making needs planning

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