

# Advance Planning for People with **Bipolar Disorder**

A guide to making decisions about your personal  
welfare, property and financial affairs.



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Psychoeducation, Anxiety, Release,  
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# Introduction

## Who is this booklet designed for?

This booklet has been designed as part of a project about bipolar disorder. You may therefore find it particularly useful if you are either:

- A person who has bipolar disorder;
- A person who looks after or cares for somebody who has bipolar disorder;
- A person who wishes to find out more about bipolar disorder and advance planning in general;
- A person who has another condition, such as schizoaffective disorder, who feels that all or some of the information contained in this booklet may be relevant for them.



## What is Bipolar Disorder?

Bipolar Disorder is a condition that affects approximately 1-2% of the United Kingdom. People who have bipolar disorder experience moderate to severe changes in mood. These range from feelings of extreme joy, irritability, over-activity and over-confidence (known as 'mania') to feelings of sadness, anger, guilt and hopelessness (known as 'depression'). These periods of mania and depression can be serious enough to affect everyday life, although it can be controlled through medical treatment and counselling.

## What is capacity?

If you need to make an important decision about some aspect of your personal welfare, such as medical treatment or your finances, you have the right to make whatever decision you like. However, if you have a condition such as bipolar disorder, the symptoms may sometimes be so severe that your ability to make these decisions may be affected. This decision-making ability is known as 'capacity'. If you do not have capacity to make an important decision yourself, then somebody else can make this decision for you, based on what is in your best interests.

## What is the Mental Capacity Act?

The Mental Capacity Act is a part of law that came into force in 2007. Its main purpose is to provide a framework for decisions to be made for people who are unable to make the decisions themselves. The Mental Capacity Act affects people who are 16 years and over, living in England and Wales. It provides detailed guidance on the following issues:

- How to correctly determine whether a person has capacity to make their own decisions for themselves;
- How to correctly make a decision in a person's best interests, if this person does not have capacity;
- How people can make important decisions in advance, in case they lose capacity in the future.

This booklet will provide information about all three of these issues, including detailed information about the advance planning options available under the Act.

## What is Advance Planning and why is it so important?

Advance Planning, also known as Advance Decision-making, is the process of planning for a time when you will not be able to make decisions because you have lost capacity. If you do not have capacity and an important decision has to be made, somebody else can make this decision based on what is in your best interests. Planning ahead for such times will help you to make your wishes and feelings known and respected during times where you are unwell.

## What Advance Planning options are currently available?

There are three types of advance decision that can be made depending on the type of decision that you want to make.

- **Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment (also known as an 'ADRT' or 'Advance Decision')** - You can use an Advance Decision to refuse medical treatment that you do not want when you do not have capacity to refuse this treatment. An Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment has to be made when a person has capacity, even though it only comes into effect once capacity has been lost. When an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment has been made properly, it is legally binding upon the decision-maker, which means that treatment that you have refused cannot be given to you even if the decision-maker disagrees with your decision. There is one exception to this rule, which may apply if you have been sectioned under the Mental Health Act. Information on this exception, as well as more detail about how to make an ADRT, can be found in Section 2 of this booklet.



- **Statement of Wishes and Feelings (also known as an 'Advance Statement')** - An Advance Statement can be used to indicate your wishes and feelings about any issue, ranging from medical treatment to basic care and financial matters. Unlike Advance Decisions to Refuse Treatment, Advance Statements are not legally binding upon the decision-maker, which means your wishes may be overridden if the decision-maker feels that following your wishes would not be in your best interest, but the decision-maker does have to take your wishes into account. See Section 3 on making a Statement of Wishes and Feelings.



- **The third method of advance planning is known as a Lasting Power of Attorney (also known as an 'LPA')** - A Lasting Power of Attorney is a document that allows you to appoint a person of your choice to take control of your affairs when you do not have the capacity to manage this yourself. The LPA does not determine how a decision will be made, but rather who makes it. How the decision is made is fixed by the 'best interests' test in the Act (see section 1). There are two types of LPA; one for managing property and financial affairs and one for managing issues related to personal welfare. Further details of how to make a Lasting Power of Attorney and the types of issues that they cover can be found in Section 4 of this booklet.



# SECTION 1:

## THE MENTAL CAPACITY ACT

### The Mental Capacity Act and decision-making

The Mental Capacity Act has five important principles that have to be followed at all times:

1. You must begin by assuming that everybody has the capacity to make decisions for themselves
2. If somebody finds it difficult to make decisions for themselves, they should be given as much support and help as possible to make these decisions
3. Just because somebody makes a decision that other people may think is unwise, it does not necessarily mean that they do not have capacity
4. If a person does not have capacity and needs to have a particular decision taken for them, this must always be taken in the person's 'best interests' as defined in the Act
5. If a person needs to have a particular decision taken for them by someone else, the decision-maker must try to restrict that person's rights and freedom as little as possible

The Mental Capacity Act also states that nobody should assume that you do not have capacity simply based on:

- Your age
- Your appearance
- The way you act
- The fact that you have an illness or a disability
- The fact that you may be unable to make other more difficult decisions
- The fact that you may have not been able to make similar decisions in the past

### How does somebody decide that I do not have capacity to make a particular decision?

Before a person can say that you do not have capacity to make a particular decision for yourself they will have to do a test for this, which has two stages.

**Stage 1** of the test is as follows:

- You must have a condition that affects the way that your mind works – so if for example, a person had bipolar disorder, this would be a condition which affects the way the mind works.
- You must be unable to make a particular decision because of this condition – this is important to remember. Just because you have a condition such as bipolar disorder, it does not automatically mean that you will not be able to make a particular decision. Also, it may mean that you can make some decisions, but not others. You can only be considered to lack capacity when you cannot make a particular decision because of the symptoms of your condition.

For **Stage 2** of the test, you will not have capacity to make a particular decision for yourself if you cannot do one or more of the following things:

- Understand any information that is given to you about the particular decision that needs to be made;
- Remember any information that you are given long enough for you to be able to make the decision;
- Weigh up the information that has been given to you when making the decision;
- Communicate the decision that you want to make, either by talking, using sign language, or other means.

### How is the Mental Capacity Act used to decide whether something is in my best interests?

If you do not have capacity to make a particular decision yourself, then another suitable person needs to make this decision for you. Any decision made by somebody else on your behalf must always be in your best interests. According to the Mental Capacity Act, a person who is making a decision in your best interests must:

- Encourage you to take part in making the decision as much as possible;
- Find out what your wishes and feelings were in the past and what they are at the moment. You may have written something down or spoken about something that would help the person making the decision, so it is important to make your wishes and feelings heard;
- Find out about any particular beliefs you have that might be relevant to the decision. For example, you might have strong religious or political beliefs that are relevant to the decision;
- Think about whether you will have capacity again at a later time. If so, it may be possible to wait until you are in a position to make the decision yourself instead of somebody else making it for you, or to limit the effect of the decision so you can re-visit it when you are able to do so. Also, nobody should decide what is in your best interests simply because of:  
Age  
Appearance  
Presence of illness or disability

## How does all this apply to Bipolar Disorder?

Bipolar disorder is a condition which involves changes in mood. This means that the symptoms are not there all the time. If you have bipolar disorder and are experiencing symptoms of either mania or depression, it is possible that your capacity to make decisions will be affected because of these symptoms. However, this does not mean that capacity will always be affected. This depends on how long the symptoms last and how severe they are. Very importantly, it depends on the particular decision that has to be made at the time.

Some decisions may be easier to make than others and therefore your capacity has to be assessed in relation to each decision individually. When you are not having symptoms, your capacity will not be affected and you will be able to make all or most decisions for yourself. Nobody is allowed to just assume that because you have bipolar disorder, you will therefore never have capacity to make your own decisions.



## I do not like the idea of somebody else making decisions for me, even if I cannot make them myself. What can I do about this?

The Mental Capacity Act allows you to plan ahead for a time when you lose capacity. There are three options that you can choose from and these will be explained in the rest of this booklet.

Below is a fictional case study which illustrates the point being made.



### An example:

*John, aged 40, has bipolar disorder. He has tooth decay and needs to have treatment on the tooth to repair it. John's dentist explains the treatment to him and what it will involve. However, John is experiencing symptoms of mania at the time and believes that he can heal the tooth decay just by touching it. The dentist explains to John that this is not possible, but John refuses to believe him.*

*The dentist decides that because of this, John is not able to properly weigh up the information that was given to him. Therefore, John does not have capacity to make the decision about the treatment.*

*The dentist speaks with John's wife who says that when John has been well, he regularly speaks about wanting to get his tooth treated, as it is very painful. The dentist therefore decides that it would be in John's best interests to have the tooth treated.*



# SECTION 2:

## ADVANCE DECISIONS TO REFUSE TREATMENT

### What is an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment?

If your doctor thinks that you should be given a particular medical treatment, but you do not wish to have it, you have the right to refuse the treatment as long as you have the capacity to make this decision. However, if you do not have capacity, the doctor may decide to give you the treatment because he/she feels that it would be in your best interests, but if there is a particular treatment that you do not wish to have, you can make an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment which the doctor has to respect even if you have lost capacity. This means that he/she cannot give you medical treatment which you have refused in your Advance Decision, as long as it has been made correctly. An Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment is very useful for people with bipolar disorder. If you have the condition, you may lose capacity during either the manic or depressive stages if the symptoms are particularly severe. Once you are well again, your capacity will return and you will be able to make decisions yourself once again.



### How old do I have to be to make an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment?

You must be at least 18 years old to make an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment.

### Can I use an Advance Decision to ask for a particular treatment?

An Advance Decision can only be used to tell people what treatment you do not want and when you do not want it. It cannot be used to ask for a particular treatment that you may want to receive. You can express a wish about that, though (see section 3).

### Do I have to make my Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment in writing?

As a general rule, you do not have to make an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment in writing if you do not want to. If you want, for example, you can simply tell the doctor that you want to make an Advance Decision to refuse a particular treatment. The doctor should make a note of your wishes so it is clear that you are refusing treatment. However, it is strongly recommended that you make an Advance Decision in writing and have it witnessed to avoid any confusion about what treatment you want to refuse and when you want to refuse it. You have to do that for decisions that may put your life at risk, as discussed opposite.

### If I want to make an Advance Decision in writing, what information should I include?

The content of an Advance Decision is up to you, because it should apply specifically to your situation. However, you should at least include the following information:

- Your name
- Your address
- Your date of birth
- Your contact details, such as a telephone number or email address
- The name of your doctors
- The date on which you made the Advance Decision
- The treatment that you want to refuse
- The circumstances when you want to refuse the treatment
- Your signature.



### Can I ask other people for help when making my Advance Decision?

You do not have to, but it is a very good idea to get advice from other people when you decide to make an Advance Decision, including your family and your doctor.

In any event, make sure people know about your Advance Decision – if people don't know about it, they can't follow it!



### **Can I refuse treatment that is intended to save my life?**

You may want to refuse medical treatment that will save your life; for example, you may not want to be revived if you have a heart attack. You can refuse this type of treatment in advance, but the rules are slightly stricter. If you are refusing treatment which will save your life, you must do this in writing and you must clearly say that you want to refuse treatment even if your life is at risk.

As well as signing the Advance Decision yourself, you must also get it signed by another adult of your choice. This person needs to see that you have made an Advance Decision and mention this in the document.

### **Do I have to use any particular words or phrases in my Advance Decision?**

You may use whatever words or phrases that you like when you make your Advance Decision. It is your document and you are in control of what you want to say. Therefore, you do not need to use any particular words, such as medical terms. All that is important is that you are very clear about what you want, so that anybody reading your Advance Decision will know that you are refusing a particular treatment.

### **Can I make changes to my Advance Decision once I have made it?**

Once you make an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment, you can make any changes that you like to it. If you wish, you can also withdraw it altogether if you decide that you would like to receive treatment that you previously refused. However, you can only make changes to your Advance Decision if you have capacity.

### **Once I have made an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment, does a doctor have to respect it?**

If you have made an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment correctly, a doctor cannot ignore it and give you the treatment that you have refused unless (a) you have done something inconsistent with the refusal since it was made (such as consented to the treatment covered by the refusal) or (b) treatment is under the Mental Health Act (see below). Otherwise, doctors must respect your wishes even if they do not agree with your decision. If you have not correctly made an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment, you might be given treatment that you do not want, so do make sure that you think about your Advance Decision very carefully.



### **Is there any time that a doctor is allowed to give me treatment that I have refused in an Advance Decision?**

A doctor may be able to give you treatment that you have refused when you have been sectioned under the Mental Health Act. That applies only if you have been sectioned, and if the treatment is for a mental disorder. It does not apply to electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), where your Advance Decision cannot be overridden. If you have bipolar disorder for example, and doctors think that you need to be sectioned in order to receive medication for it, then that would be treatment for a mental disorder, and could be given.

### **If I have been sectioned, are doctors allowed to give me treatment that's not for a mental disorder?**

Any treatment that is not for a mental disorder is known as 'treatment for a physical disorder'. If you have made an Advance Decision, which refuses treatment for a physical disorder, and you are later sectioned under the Mental Health Act, the doctors are not allowed to give you the treatment, so your Advance Decision will not be affected.

### **Once I have made my Advance Decision, what should I do with it?**

If you have written your Advance Decision, you must first keep a copy for yourself in a safe place. You should also give copies of it to anyone that you think should know about it. This can be members of your family, your friends or your doctors.

# SECTION 3:

## STATEMENTS OF WISHES AND FEELINGS

### What is a Statement of Wishes and Feelings?

A Statement of Wishes and Feelings is a way that you can express your wishes, feelings and opinions about almost any aspect of your life. It is used by anybody who needs to decide what is in your best interests when you do not have capacity. Your past and present wishes and feelings must be considered by any person who is deciding what is in your best interests. Therefore, a Statement of Wishes and Feelings is a very useful way of telling people what you think.



### What type of things can I write about in my Statement of Wishes and Feelings?

The content of your Statement of Wishes and Feelings is essentially up to you. If there is something about any part of your care or treatment that you have an opinion about, you are free to mention it.

### Here are some examples of what you can write about:

#### • Medical Treatment

If there is any treatment that you would or would not like to receive, you can write about it in your Statement of Wishes and Feelings. In the past, you might have been given treatment that you thought worked well. You might therefore want to have this treatment again. If so, you can mention this in your statement. However, you cannot use a Statement of Wishes and Feelings to demand treatment. Your doctor has to think about whether giving you the treatment you want would be in your best interests. If it is not, then your doctor does not have to give it to you. If you do not want to be given a particular treatment, you can also mention this in your statement, but again, the doctor can decide to give you the treatment if it is in your best interests. The best way to make sure that you are not given treatment that you do not want is to make an Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment.





**• People who should and should not be told that you are ill**

You may have family or friends that you are close to, who you think should be told when you are ill.

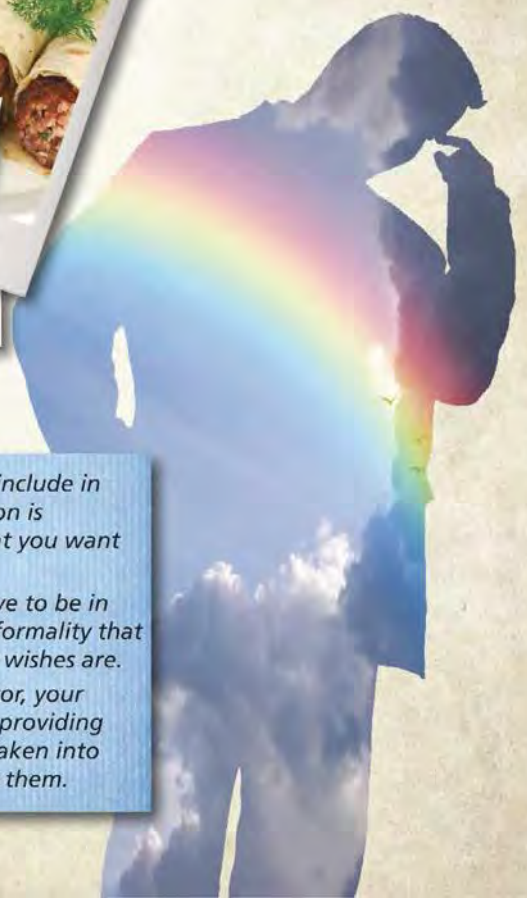
You might also not want some people to know that you are ill. In both cases, you can mention these people in your Statement of Wishes and Feelings.



**• Diet**

You may have specific dietary needs that you want other people to know about.

For example, you may be a vegetarian, or only be able to eat certain foods because of your religious beliefs.



*This list only has a few examples of what you can include in your Statement of Wishes and Feelings. Each person is different, so please think very carefully about what you want included.*

*The statement of wishes and feelings does not have to be in writing, but writing it down can give it a sense of formality that can be helpful in avoiding debate as to what your wishes are.*

*And do remember to tell people such as your doctor, your family and your attorney (see overleaf), including providing copies of written wishes. If you want the wishes taken into account, the decision-maker needs to know about them.*

# SECTION 4:

## LASTING POWERS OF ATTORNEY

### What is a Lasting Power of Attorney?

A Lasting Power of Attorney is a legal document that allows you to select somebody to make certain decisions for you, if you do not have the capacity to make them yourself. You can create either a Lasting Power of Attorney for Personal Welfare or a Lasting

Power of Attorney for Property and Affairs. You can, of course, make both.



### How do I make a Lasting Power of Attorney?

It is important to follow the correct procedure when you make a Lasting Power of Attorney. Otherwise, it will not be valid and you cannot use it.

- You must be 18 years old or over to make a Lasting Power of Attorney;
- You must make a Lasting Power of Attorney in writing;
- You must clearly say that you understand how to make a Lasting Power of Attorney and that you want it to be used when you do not have capacity;
- You must write the names of people whom you think should and should not be told about your Lasting Power of Attorney.

The web site of the Official Guardian has a blank form on it that you can use, see <http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/opg>

### Who can I choose as my Attorney?

Your attorney can be anybody whom you know personally, such as a member of your family or a friend. Being an attorney is a very important job and you should think very carefully about who you want for this role. Attorneys are not generally supervised closely, so you should select somebody honest that you trust.

### What are the main duties of an Attorney?

Your attorney must follow the five main principles of the Mental Capacity Act at all times. These principles can be found in Section 1 of this booklet. They make decisions in your best interests (see section 1), so are required to take into account your views and values, and in particular any statements of wishes you have made (see section 3).

### Is there anything that an Attorney is not allowed to do?

Your attorney is only allowed to make decisions about the issues that you have told them about. If you have made a Lasting Power of Attorney for Personal Welfare, the attorney will not be allowed to do the following things:

- Make decisions for you when you have the capacity to make these decisions yourself;
- Agree to any medical treatment for you if you have already made an Advance Decision to refuse that particular treatment. If you wish, you can tell your attorney to ignore your Advance Decision and allow them to decide what is best, but you must give them permission before they can act;

- Make any decisions about medical treatment that will save your life, unless you have given them permission to make these decisions for you.

### What does a Lasting Power of Attorney for Personal Welfare cover?

With a Lasting Power of Attorney for Personal Welfare, you can ask your attorney to make decisions that are to do with your care or treatment. Here are some examples:

- **Medical Treatment** – this might include things such as whether you should be given a particular treatment, such as medicine or an operation;
- **Accommodation** – this might include decisions about where you should live;
- **Who should be contacted when you are ill and do not have capacity;**
- **Day to day decisions about your life** – who can visit you? Should you go on vacation? How should you spend your time?

But only if you lack capacity to make these decisions yourself.

### Once I have created a Lasting Power of Attorney, is there anything else I need to do before I can use it?

Once you make your Lasting Power of Attorney, you must register it with the Public Guardian. The Public Guardian is there to make sure that attorneys carry out their duties properly and honestly. Contact details for the Office of the Public Guardian are provided at the end of this booklet.

### When do I have to register the Lasting Power of Attorney?

You can register the Lasting Power of Attorney at any time before you need to use it, whether or not you have capacity. However, it is better to register it with the Public Guardian as soon as you make it, so that there is less chance of any problems arising when you actually need to use it.

### How much does it cost to register a Lasting Power of Attorney?

At the moment (August 2014) it costs £110 to register each Power of Attorney. Visit [www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney/how-much-it-costs](http://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney/how-much-it-costs) for the latest information.

### What does a Lasting Power of Attorney for property and affairs cover?

With a Lasting Power of Attorney for Property and Affairs, you can ask your attorney to make decisions that are to do with your property and your money. Here are some examples:

- **Property** – this might include things such as selling your house or paying your mortgage;
- **Finances** – this might include decisions to do with your money, such as paying bills or dealing with your bank account;
- **Making gifts to others** – this might be useful if you want to give a gift to somebody else, such as some money or a car;
- Running your business

#### Example one: Personal welfare

*Rachel, aged 23, has bipolar disorder and has particular problems with her psychiatrist, whom she feels does not listen to her. Rachel is concerned that if she loses capacity to make particular decisions about her treatment in the future, her doctor will make decisions that Rachel will not be happy with. Rachel therefore decides to appoint his sister Martha as her attorney. She gives Martha power of attorney to make decisions about any form of medical treatment, including any treatment that is designed to save life.*



#### Example two: Property and affairs

*Mahesh, aged 35, has bipolar disorder and experiences severe symptoms of mania. When this happens, Mahesh spends a lot of money and has gone into debt. This debt includes high credit card bills and falling behind with his rent. Mahesh is concerned that these financial problems will continue because he goes through the manic phase quite frequently. Mahesh therefore decides to make a Lasting Power of Attorney for Property and Affairs. He appoints his mother Rani to act as his attorney. She has been given the power to do whatever she thinks is right to stop Mahesh's financial situation from getting worse, particularly when he is experiencing the manic phase of bipolar disorder. Rani decides to take Mahesh's credit card away for the time being and places a daily limit on the amount of money he can spend. This way, Rani is able to put money aside to pay the credit card bills and make sure that Mahesh's bills are paid on time.*



# SECTION 5:

## TIPS FOR MANAGING EVERYDAY FINANCES

### More tips to help control overspending

If you have bipolar disorder, or know somebody that does, you will know that some people with the condition may feel the urge to spend large amounts of money, even when they cannot afford it. This booklet has so far given information about the options available under the Mental Capacity Act. However, there are also some simple, everyday things that can be done to help control over-spending:

### • Keep your family and friends involved

Even if you do not want to make a Lasting Power of Attorney, you can still get support from family and friends. Try and think very carefully about how you feel when you want to spend large amounts of money. There may be particular symptoms that come up each time you feel the urge to spend; if there is, make sure you write down or tell your friends and family about them, so they will be able to support you during this time. If you know somebody who has bipolar disorder, try and talk to them and encourage them to think about these issues.



- **Talk to somebody in your bank**

If you are concerned about overspending, you can talk to somebody in your bank about this and ask them for advice. There may be a number of things that they can do to help you control your spending, such as:

- **Limiting your overdraft facility**

An overdraft facility can sometimes be useful, but if you need to use it, the bank often charges you for it. This can be risky because the more you use your overdraft, the longer it will take to pay it back. If you really need an overdraft facility, try and keep it as low as possible, for example, £100 maximum. If you do not think you will need it, do not ask for it to be set up.

- **Set limits on the amount of money you can take out of your account**

You will of course have to take money from your bank account regularly for essentials. However, it may be more tempting to spend more than you can afford which may cause problems. If you are worried about this, speak to your bank about setting up a daily limit on your account. For example, you may only need to spend £50 a day, so you can ask your bank to stop you taking more than this out of your account per day.

- **Create a joint account that needs two signatures**

It may be useful for you to set up an account that will not allow you to take money out unless you and another person are both together. You can choose somebody you trust for this, such as a partner or a parent. Different banks may give different options for a joint account, so ask somebody in your bank what they can do for you.

- **Think about how you use credit cards**

If you have a credit card, or more than one, think about how much you use them and whether you need them. Having a credit card can be useful and you do not necessarily need to stop using them completely. However, it is possible to overuse them if you are experiencing a manic stage of bipolar disorder. Ask somebody that you trust, such as a family member or a friend, to keep an eye on how much you use your credit card so that they can help you control your spending if necessary. If you have more than one credit card, you should think very carefully about whether you need more than one and perhaps cutting the rest of them up.



# APPENDIX 1:

## ADVANCE DECISIONS TO REFUSE TREATMENT

### EXAMPLE 1:

Name: Joe Bloggs  
Date of Birth: 02/06/1976  
Address: A Street, Wolverhampton, West Midlands  
Tel: 0123 456789

This document explains the treatments that I wish to refuse in the event of my losing capacity and the circumstances in which I want the refusal to take effect.

Treatment to be refused: Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)

Circumstances: In all circumstances, even when all other types of treatment have been tried and have not worked.

Treatment to be refused: Haloperidol

Circumstances: If I need to be given anti-psychotic medication during the manic phase of bipolar disorder. I am specifically refusing Haloperidol and not all types of medication.

Signed:

Date:

Witnessed by:

### EXAMPLE 2:

Name: Joe Bloggs  
Date of Birth: 02/06/1976  
Address: A Street, Wolverhampton,  
West Midlands  
Tel: 0123 456789

When I am experiencing depression, I do not ever want to be given Venlafaxine because it makes me feel like being sick and also makes me put on weight, which makes me more depressed.

Signed:

Date:

Witnessed by:

### EXAMPLE 3:

Name: Joe Bloggs  
Date of Birth: 02/06/1976  
Address: A Street,  
Wolverhampton,  
West Midlands  
Tel: 0123 456789

I do not want to be given Electroconvulsive Therapy in any circumstances, even if it is an emergency and my life is at risk.

Signed:

Date:

Witnessed by:

# APPENDIX 2:

## STATEMENTS OF WISHES AND FEELINGS

Name: Joe Bloggs

Date of Birth: 02/06/1976

Address: A Street, Wolverhampton, West Midlands

Tel: 0123 456789

I have bipolar disorder. It will be easy to tell when I am in the middle of a high phase. When I am high, I make claims that Paul McCartney died in a car accident in 1966 and that I replaced him in the Beatles. This is not true, but if anybody says that they do not believe me, I become very irritable and aggressive, although I have never hurt anybody. If I become irritable or start shouting, please do not shout back at me and tell me that I am mad, crazy or whatever. This only upsets me more. If I make claims about being Paul McCartney's replacement in the Beatles, the best way to calm me down is just to say, "Are you sure about that?" You may need to say this a few times. This makes me think about whether I am correct or not.

I also spend lots of money, which I may not be able to afford. I particularly buy a lot of CDs and DVDs, so if you see me with a lot of them suddenly, this may be a sign that I am high. Please take away my bank cards and keep them somewhere so that I don't spend any more money. When I am not ill, I go to bed every night at 11pm. When I am high, I will still be up at this time and sometimes do not sleep at all.

When I am having low periods, I talk a lot about death and think out loud about the best ways to end my life. If I start talking like this, do not encourage it, but please do not shout at me either. It means that I am in crisis and need somebody just to be with me and support me.

Please tell the following people when I become ill:

Mr James Bloggs, my father - 0123 456789 (telephone) or jamesbloggs@email.com

Mrs Jane Bloggs, my mother - 0123 456789 (telephone) or janebloggs@email.com

Mr Wayne Bloggs, my brother - 0987 654321 (telephone) or wbloggs@email.com

Dr Jonathan Doe, my GP - 01902 333444 (telephone)

Dr Linda Smith, my psychiatrist - 0181 811 8181 (telephone)

Please do not tell the following people that I am ill in any circumstances:

Sarah Bloggs, my sister - we had an argument 10 years ago and haven't seen each other since.

I am taking these medications at the moment: Lithium and Valproate

If I am ill, please give me the following medications if possible: Lithium and Valproate

I do not want to have the following treatments under any circumstances:

Haloperidol - I have had problems with the side effects before

Any benzodiazepines - I am worried that they will become addictive.

I am currently going to group therapy every Wednesday and find this very helpful.

Food and diet:

I am Hindu and a strict vegetarian. This means I do not eat any meat or fish. I do eat eggs and dairy products so am very happy to be given these. I enjoy Brand X Baked Beans. If Brand X is not available then please do not give me baked beans to eat at all.

Other things:

Please do not call me 'mate'. I particularly hate it when people I don't know call me this.

I love going for a walk every evening at 7pm, even if it is cold or raining.

## Authors:

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### FURTHER READING AND INFORMATION

This information pack has been written specifically to provide you with information about how the Mental Capacity Act and advance decision-making is relevant to bipolar disorder. However, other reading material on this topic exists and you may find it helpful to read some or all of it in addition to this information pack. References are given below.

**The Mental Capacity Act 2005** - Published by The Stationery Office (23rd April 2007); ISBN No: 011703746X; can also be downloaded online at:  
[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050009\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2005/ukpga_20050009_en_1)

**The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice 2007** - Published by The Stationery Office (23rd April 2007); ISBN No: 011703746X; can be downloaded online at:  
<http://www.dca.gov.uk/legal-policy/mental-capacity/mca-cp.pdf>

**Advance Decisions to Refuse Treatment Specialist Guidance (Adult)** - Published by NHS East Midlands Health and Social Care Community (April 2007); can be downloaded online at:  
<http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk>

**Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment** - <http://www.adrtnhs.co.uk>

**Lasting Power of Attorney** - <http://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney>

### Useful organisations:

**Office of the Public Guardian** - <http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/opg>. Telephone 0300 456 0300

**Bipolar UK** - <http://www.bipolaruk.org.uk/>

**MIND** - <http://www.mind.org.uk/>

**Rethink** - <http://www.rethink.org/>

**Citizens Advice Bureau** - <http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

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- <http://www.emahsn.org.uk> - <http://www.clahrc-em.nihr.ac.uk>

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