

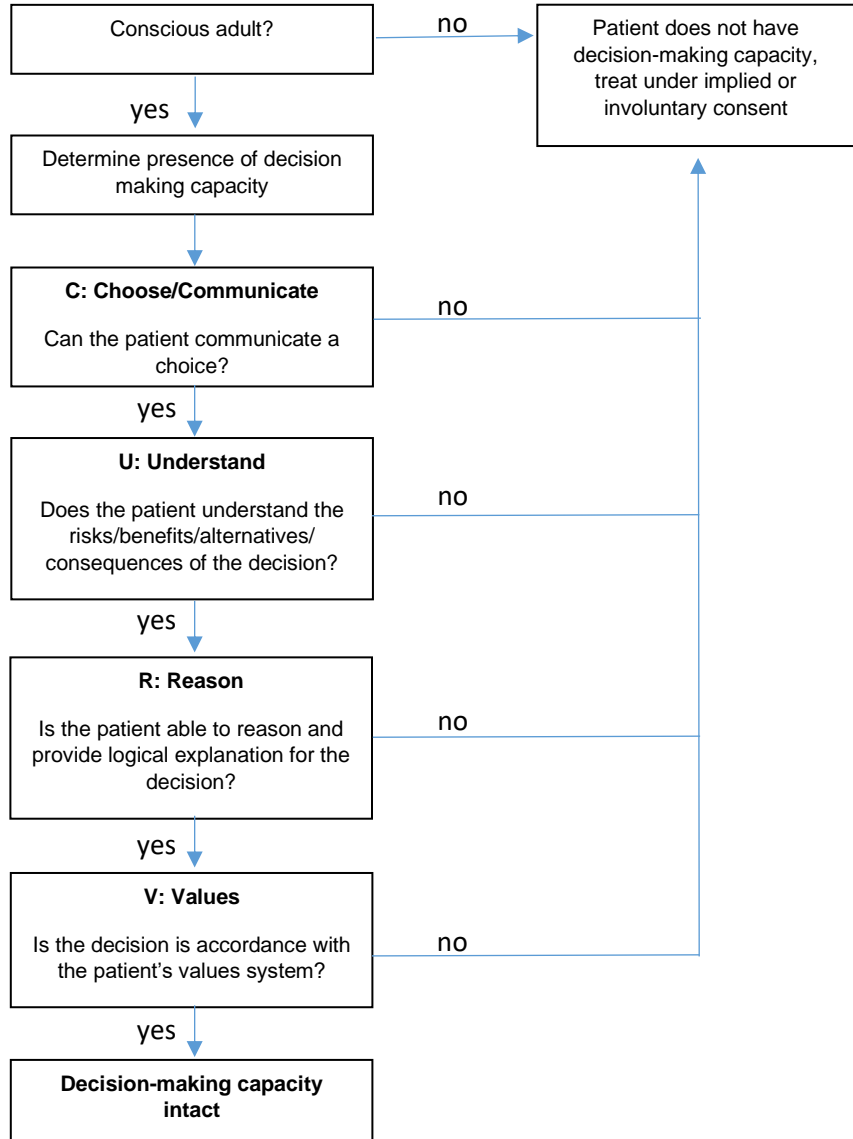
G003 LFD GENERAL GUIDELINES: CONSENT

General Principles

- An adult in the State of Wyoming is 18 years of age or older.
- Every adult is presumed capable of making medical treatment decisions. This includes the right to make "bad" decisions that the prehospital provider believes are not in the best interests of the patient.
- A call to 9-1-1 itself does not prevent a patient from refusing treatment. A patient may refuse medical treatment (IVs, oxygen, medications), but you should try to inform the patient of the need for therapies, offer again, and treat to the extent possible.
- The odor of alcohol on a patient's breath does not, by itself, prevent a patient from refusing treatment.

Values

- Attempt to assess if the patient's decision is in line with how they have approached the other questions they have been asked during the assessment.
- If possible, obtain collateral from friends or family to determine if the patient's decision is in line with other decisions or conversations.
- An example question to assess values: "How did you reach your decision to accept or reject care?"



Involuntary Consent

In rare circumstances a person other than the patient may authorize consent: This may include:

- Court order (Guardianship)
- Law enforcement officer may authorize transport of prisoners in custody or detention in order to be evaluated but cannot dictate treatment decisions.
- Persons under a mental health hold or commitment who are in danger to themselves or others or are gravely disabled.
- It is sufficient to assume the patient lacks decision making capacity if there is a reasonable concern when any person appears to have a mental illness and as a result of such mental illness, appears to be an imminent danger to others or self. Effort should be made to obtain consent for transport from the patient, and to preserve the patient's dignity throughout the process. However, the patient may be transported over his/her objections and treated under the involuntary consent if the patient does not comply.
- Contact Base if there are any questions or concerns about decision-making capacity.

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General Principles: Minors

A parent, including a parent who is a minor, may consent to medical or emergency treatment of his/her child. There are exceptions:

1. Neither the child nor the parent may refuse medical treatment on religious grounds if the child is in imminent danger as a result of not receiving medical treatment, or when the child is in a life-threatening situation, or when the condition will result in serious handicap or disability.
2. The consent of a parent is not necessary to authorize hospital or emergency health care when a first responder in good faith relies on a minor's consent, if the minor is at least 15 years of age and emancipated or married.
3. Minors may seek treatment for abortion, drug addiction, and/or venereal disease without consent of parents. Minors greater than 15 years old may seek treatment for mental health.

When in doubt, your actions should be guided by what is in the minor's best interests and Base Contact.

Procedure: Minors

A parent or legal guardian may provide consent to or refuse treatment in a non- life-threatening situation.

When the parent is not present to consent or refuse:

1. If a minor has an injury or illness, but not a life-threatening medical emergency, you should attempt to contact the parent(s) or legal guardian. If this cannot be done promptly, transport.
2. If the child does not need transport, they can be left at the scene in the custody of a responsible adult (e.g., teacher, social worker, grandparent). It should only be in very rare circumstances that a child of any age is left at the scene if the parent is not also present.
3. If the minor has a life-threatening injury or illness, transport and treat per protocols. If the parent objects to treatment, CONTACT BASE immediately and treat to the extent allowable, and notify law enforcement to respond and assist.