

## TREATMENT DECISION-MAKING DURING PERIODS OF DECISIONAL INCAPACITY: PATIENTS' PRIORITIES

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**About the research:** Treatment decision-making for incapacitated patients continues to pose a formidable challenge. Clinical practice relies on surrogates to make treatment decisions based on the patient's advance directive (AD). In the absence of an AD, surrogates are asked to make the treatment decision they think the patient would have made if he or she were capacitated. This approach aims to promote patient autonomy by basing decisions on the patient's own treatment preferences. Yet many patients do not complete an AD, and those who do frequently just designate a family member to make decisions for them. Furthermore, data suggest that many patients want their surrogates to have considerable leeway when making treatment decisions. These findings have led to claims that current practice is based on a mistaken understanding of patients' priorities. Yet there are few empirical data regarding which goals patients prioritize in the event of incapacity. The present study aims to address this gap in the literature by offering the first systematic data on patients' priorities for how treatment decisions are made for them in the event of incapacity.

### Publications

Rid A, Wesley R, Pavlick M, Maynard S, Roth K, Wendler D: Patients' priorities for treatment decision-making during periods of incapacity: Quantitative survey. *Palliative & Supportive Care (in press)*

Other publications are in preparation

### Presentations

*The moral maze of making treatment decisions for incapacitated patients.* American Society for Bioethics and Humanities Annual Meeting, Atlanta, October 2013

*Treatment decision-making during periods of decisional incapacity: patients' priorities.* 27th European Conference on Philosophy of Medicine and Health Care, University of Basel, August 2013

*The moral maze of making treatment decisions for incapacitated patients.* Research Seminar, ETHOX Centre, University of Oxford, May 2013

*How do patients want treatment decisions to be made during periods of decisional incapacity? Results from a quantitative survey in the U.S.* Research Seminar, Department of Social Science, Health & Medicine, King's College London, March 2013