Activity

Consider the following scenarios. If possible discuss them with colleagues or fellow students and consider the associated question:

1. Mia, a registered nurse, is conducting interviews with teenagers about their experiences of having insulin dependent diabetes. Where appropriate the parents have given consent and the teenagers their assent. It has been agreed that the parents will not be present during the interviews. During an interview with Amy, who is 15, Amy discloses to Mia that she thinks she is pregnant. What should Mia do?
2. A large-scale national longitudinal survey is being undertaken involving adult males about work–life balance. Data are collected every six months by postal questionnaire. The research team have assured participants that their data will be anonymised and confidentiality will be maintained. One section of the questionnaires involves questions that measure psychological wellbeing. It is noted that the responses of one participant have changed dramatically in comparison to six months ago. The most recent responses indicate that he is now feeling suicidal. What should the research team do?
3. Claude is five days old and is being cared for in a neonatal intensive care unit. Claude’s mother has severe pre-eclampsia and is being cared for in the high dependency unit of another hospital. The neonatal team would like to enrol Claude in a randomised controlled trial. Claude’s father is visiting the neonatal unit this afternoon. Can Claude’s father consent to his son’s participation in the trial?
4. Mary has Alzheimer’s disease and is attending an outpatient’s appointment with her daughter Laura. The consultant tells Laura about a new drug trial and Laura would like her mother to take part in the study. Can Laura consent to Mary’s participation in the study?
5. Zak is eight years old and has cystic fibrosis. Zak’s parents have been approached about a research study. Zak’s father feels he has already been bombarded with treatments and that they should decline. Zak’s mother, however, is very keen that he be enrolled in the study. Can the clinicians take consent from Zak’s mother?
6. Ian has been involved in a road traffic accident and is being cared for in the emergency department. He requires urgent surgery and will then be cared for in the intensive care unit. Before being transferred to the operating theatre, it is noted that Ian meets the criteria for a randomised controlled trial. The clinicians would like to enrol Ian in a study which will determine the type of surgery undertaken. Participation in the study has the potential to dramatically improve Ian’s survival and recovery. Should the clinicians proceed and obtain Ian’s consent for the study?
7. Jasmine is thirteen years old and has leukaemia. Her parents have consented to Jasmine’s involvement in a study. However, Jasmine has made it very clear that she does not want to take part in the study and has said she will refuse to take the required medication. Should the clinicians take consent for the study from Jasmine’s parents?
8. Wendy is fifteen years old and her son is three days old. The clinicians would like to enrol Wendy’s son in a research study. How should the clinicians proceed with regard to obtaining consent for the study?