



# Mental Capacity Act 2005

## 2005 CHAPTER 9

### PART 1

#### PERSONS WHO LACK CAPACITY

##### *The principles*

### 1 The principles

- (1) The following principles apply for the purposes of this Act.
- (2) A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that he lacks capacity.
- (3) A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps to help him to do so have been taken without success.
- (4) A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because he makes an unwise decision.
- (5) An act done, or decision made, under this Act for or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be done, or made, in his best interests.
- (6) Before the act is done, or the decision is made, regard must be had to whether the purpose for which it is needed can be as effectively achieved in a way that is less restrictive of the person's rights and freedom of action.

#### **Commencement Information**

- II** S. 1 wholly in force at 1.10.2007; s. 1 not in force at Royal Assent see s. 68(1)-(3); s. 1 in force for certain purposes at 1.4.2007 by [S.I. 2007/563](#), [arts. 1\(2\)\(3\)](#), [2\(2\)\(a\)\(3\)](#) and s. 1 in force otherwise at 1.10.2007 by [S.I. 2007/1897](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(a\)](#)

**Changes to legislation:**

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Mental Capacity Act 2005, Cross  
Heading: The principles.