Ethical Decision-Making Aid:
The Voice of the Patient with Diminished Capacity
Updated April 2014

**Does the patient have capacity to decide and effectively participate in the care plan?**

DECISIONAL CAPACITY
Does the patient have sufficient capacity to *decide* about a care plan of this complexity?

EXECUTIVE CAPACITY
Does the patient have sufficient capacity to *manage the patient’s tasks* in a care plan of this complexity?

STOP

Yes

Is the patient likely to be cooperative / non-resistant?

No

Consider involving:
- Psych and/or Neuropsych
- Geriatrics
- Palliative Care
- Ethics

Unsure

**Is the patient likely to be cooperative / non-resistant?**

Yes

Are strategies/tactics available to gain and sustain engagement?

No

Unsure

Check-in with those who know patient more intimately

Unsure

What is known about:
- Safety / risks?
- Feasibility?
- Benefit:Harm Ratio?

Unsure

Will proceeding be safe and/or feasible relative to the complexity or invasiveness of the procedures of the plan?

Yes

PROCEED

No

STOP

Unsure

Will care plan have a minimal negative impact on overall well-being?

No

STOP

Yes

Create a strategy with clear parameters that determine if the care plan is not working or any findings above turn out to be or become false

STOP

Anticipate what an alternate care plan might be and how to transition to it

Review, Evaluate, and Adjust Plan

STOP

PROCEED