Intracranial tumor informed consent

Informed consent is the integral part of good medical practice in patients with brain tumors. Capacity to consent may be affected by the brain disorder or its treatment.

Hewins et al., intend to draw upon the current neurooncology literature to discuss the influence intracranial tumors have upon patients' capacity to consent to treatment and research.

They performed a systematic review of studies of capacity to consent for treatment or research in patients with intracranial tumours. The search retrieved 1597 papers of which 8 were considered eligible for review. Although there are obvious inherent limitations to solely assessing cognition, most research consistently demonstrated increased risk of incapacity in brain tumour patients with cognitive impairment. Specific items in cognitive screening batteries, for example Semantic Verbal Fluency Test (SVFT), Hopkins Verbal Learning Test (HVLT-Recall), and Trail Making Test A/B (TMT), are simple, easily applied tests that may act as significant red flags to identify patients at increased risk of incapacity and who subsequently will require additional cognitive/psychiatric evaluation or more formal tests for capacity to consent for treatment or research [1].

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Hewins W, Zienius K, Rogers JL, Kerrigan S, Bernstein M, Grant R. The Effects of Brain Tumours upon Medical Decision-Making Capacity. Curr Oncol Rep. 2019 May 2;21(6):55. doi: 10.1007/s11912-019-0793-3. Review. PubMed PMID: 31049786.