

## Patient Empowerment

# Recognising Power Dynamics

Practitioners are experts in their field of healthcare, but they have no authority over you. Their healthcare knowledge may be superior to yours and they deserve respect. However, their perceived power does not diminish your rights to be treated with dignity.

01.

### Expert Power:

Power gained through extensive knowledge on a particular subject is deemed to give power to the healthcare practitioner.

02.

### Expectation Power:

The unsaid expectation that healthcare practitioners tell patients what to do and patients should comply is deemed to give power to the healthcare practitioner.

03.

### Language Power:

Power gained through legitimacy of healthcare language that a patient is unfamiliar with is deemed to give power to the healthcare practitioner.

04.

### Control Power:

Power gained through being the holder of information (diagnosis) and access to resources (treatments) is deemed to give power to the healthcare practitioner.

05.

### Socioeconomic Power:

Power gained through perceived social and economic status such as education, occupation, affluence is deemed to give power to the healthcare practitioner.

06.

### Authoritative Power:

Power gained through perceived legitimate authority from duty to care of patients is deemed to give power to the healthcare practitioner.

Empowerment is not always possible in every situation, but is possible when each party acknowledges power issues and address them to enable informed decisions and consent.

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