

Policy Briefing – ReSPECT (Recommended Summary Plan for Emergency Care and Treatment) adoption in the UK

October 2022

Conversations regarding what to do in the event of a future health and care emergency require an understanding of what is important to the person. Discussing personalised recommendations for a person's clinical care and treatment is essential, if in future they are unable to express what is important to them. That is why Resuscitation Council UK (RCUK) is leading on the UK-wide adoption of the Recommended Summary Plan for Emergency Care and Treatment (ReSPECT) process.

The ReSPECT process is unique as it is the only Emergency Care and Treatment Plan (ECTP) that is available in the United Kingdom. It is increasingly being adopted within health and social care communities around the United Kingdom, including over 80% of counties in England, some areas of Scotland and soon to be in Northern Ireland. Resuscitation Council UK advocates making ReSPECT a nation-wide process which promotes parity across the four nations. Please read this policy briefing to find out the importance of the ReSPECT process in emergency care and treatment planning, and RCUK's key recommendations on ReSPECT for the four nations.

Background – Why ReSPECT is important?

ReSPECT supports professionals, patients and/or their families having a person-centered conversation around making recommendations about their care and treatment in a future emergency in which they are unable to communicate this for themselves. Discussing what a person would want to happen in advance is important. A summary of this conversation is recorded on a ReSPECT plan. This crosses all geographical boundaries and is recognised in every care setting. The plan is a clinical document intended to help clinicians make good clinical decisions in an emergency. The ReSPECT form and its content belong to the person and should be readily available in an emergency.

ReSPECT creates a unified and nationally recognised process and ensures that conversations about CPR are included as part of a broader conversation about realistic goals of care and treatment. A recent online survey¹ conducted by RCUK suggested that using the ReSPECT process can have a positive impact on patients and their families.

ReSPECT adoption across four nations

England

Key recommendations:

- Mandate the ReSPECT process as the single Emergency Care and Treatment Plan (ECTP) for England.
- Task NHSD/X with developing a single digital platform for healthcare records and start with the ReSPECT process.

At present, the ReSPECT process has been widely adopted in 80% English counties' health and social care organisations. It has also been adopted in 68% of Integrated Care Systems (ICS). We are pleased to see the Care Quality Commissions' (CQC) inclusion of the ReSPECT process in the 'Best practice

approaches in advance care planning' section of their interim report².

The ReSPECT process has been incorporated into many digital platforms in England but there is not one single digital strategy for healthcare records in the nation. RCUK recommends the ReSPECT process be mandated as the single Emergency Care and Treatment Plan (ECTP) for England involving NHDS/X to develop a single platform for healthcare records and initiate the process by incorporating the ReSPECT process.

Scotland

Key recommendations:

- RCUK recommends that Scotland amend its Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary (DNACPR) policy to the ReSPECT process.

Currently, four out of the fourteen regional health boards in Scotland have adopted the ReSPECT process as part of their realistic medicine services or anticipatory care planning³, with many other health boards working towards adoption.

The National Digital Platform is the single digital platform available in Scotland for all health records including the ReSPECT process. However, since DNACPR is still part of the national policy in Scotland, ReSPECT is still used alongside DNACPR. This prevents a change in culture around the approaches to advance decisions relating to CPR and introduces clinical risks by association.

RCUK recommends moving towards ReSPECT as it has shown tremendous cultural change in the approach to advance recommendations relating to CPR in England.

Notes

1. ReSPECT Version 3 Survey Results, 24 May 2022, The Resuscitation Council UK.
2. ["Review of Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic"](#). Interim November 2020 Report. Care Quality Commission.
3. The regional health boards in Scotland that have not yet adopted ReSPECT: NHS Ayrshire and Arran, NHS Borders, NHS Dumfries and Galloway, NHS Fife, NHS Grampian, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, NHS Highland, NHS Lanarkshire, NHS Orkney, NHS Shetland, and NHS Western Isles.
4. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>
5. The Draft Advance Care Policy for Adults 2021. <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/health/doh-acp-draft-policy.pdf>

Wales

Key recommendations:

- RCUK recommends that Wales adopt the ReSPECT process, to complement its national Advanced Care Planning (ACP) policy.

The ReSPECT process has not yet been adopted in Wales. The national Advanced Care Planning (ACP) policy includes DNACPR. However, RCUK recognises the ReSPECT process is vital for developing a shared understanding between the health and care professional and the patient about their current health conditions and the care and treatment that may be required in a future emergency

In Wales, local health and care boards must be involved proactively. In the long term, consultation must be undertaken with key stakeholders, to identify the key differences between DNACPR and ReSPECT. The ReSPECT process does not alter ACP policy and it is important to ensure emergency care and treatment plans are person-centred and focus on the improvement of patient experience and outcomes. The ReSPECT process supports conversations between the person, their families, and their health and care professionals, to understand what care and treatment matters to them, and what is realistic.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the Department of Health is developing an Advance Care Planning policy for adults in Northern Ireland. After consultation with RCUK, the Department has recommended adoption of the ReSPECT process and revocation of DNACPR from the nation's healthcare system⁵

About us

Resuscitation Council UK is saving lives by developing guidelines, influencing policy, delivering courses and supporting innovative research. Through education, training, and research, we are working towards the day when everyone in the country has the skills, they need to save a life.