



## Doing Dialogue

To design a participative process for a consortium of UK science centres aimed at young people aged between 14-19 years old to feed into a national public consultation.

### Section B: Case Definition

#### No. 5: Task 1 – Choose a question

##### Question 1

**In cases where a fetus may suffer abnormalities that are likely to be disabling in the long term, what measures may it be appropriate to take to sustain the life of the fetus or, where possible, to correct those abnormalities before birth?**

**Do you consider that there are ever circumstances when it would be appropriate to override the wishes of the pregnant woman\*?**

**\*Examples could include cases in which a fetus may suffer from serious abnormalities that are likely to be disabling in the long term, or cases where professionals consider that, by neglecting or harming herself or refusing treatment for the fetus, the mother is threatening the long term health of the fetus once born.**



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#### Question 2

**In which of these circumstances, if any, would it be appropriate to use medicine and surgery to prolong the life of the newborn?**

- **When the baby is extremely premature**
- **When the baby has congenital abnormalities**
- **When the baby has poor prospects for survival because of a genetic or other disorder, or because of growth restriction during the pregnancy**
- **When the baby has acquired brain damage and is considered to be likely to have severe disabilities later in life**



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### Question 3

**In your view, are these the principal ethical questions that the Working Party should consider?**

- 1. the moral status of the fetus**
- 2. Acting and omitting to act**
- 3. Questions about the quality of life**

**Which of these or other important ethical questions would you identify as the most important?**



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#### Question 4

**The Working Party has identified the following questions for discussion:**

**What might we mean by ‘quality of life’ for a child?**

**How do religious and spiritual influences affect decisions?**

**How do mass media influence decisions?**

**In your view, are these questions that the Working Party should consider? Should any of these questions be omitted, or are there additional questions that should be included? Which social questions would you identify as the most important?**

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### Question 5

The working party has identified the following questions for discussion;

**Who is best placed to judge the quality of life for a child?**

**When families as well as professionals are involved, whose decision should carry the most weight on whether or not to intervene to prolong the life of the fetus or a newborn baby? Examples of people likely to be involved: the mother, the father, other family members, doctors or other healthcare professionals, healthcare managers, the courts the social services.**

**Who else should be involved?**

**How should such decisions be made, and how should any difference in view between the parties be resolved?**

**When, if at all, do you think that people should use the law to challenge medical advice?**



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#### Question 6

**How much weight (if any) should be given to economic considerations in determining whether to prolong the life of fetuses or the newborn?**



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#### Question 7

**Should a quality-adjusted life (QALY) (or another measure of health gain) for a newborn child be given the same weight as a QALY for a middle aged person or elderly person?**



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#### Question 8

**Would drawing up a more directive professional guidance be helpful to parents and professionals?**

**If so, should the UK follow practice in the other countries and set a minimum age below which resuscitation normally would not be permitted?**





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#### Question 9

**Would drawing up legislation in this area be helpful to parents and professionals?**