

## Initiating the Session

### 4 Part Approach

- Opening question
- Listening
- Screening
- Confirming

### Establishing Initial Rapport

**Greet** the patient, **introduce** yourself, obtain the patient's name, attend to the patient's physical comfort, **demonstrate** respect and interest.

*Hello, I'm Dr Jones, do come and sit down.*

*Hello, my name is Dr Jones. Am I right in thinking we haven't met before?*

*Hello, I'm Dr Jones. I'm one of the four partners who make up this family practice. Please sit down. Can I just check - is it Mrs Mary French? (pause) I don't think we've met before - what do you prefer that I call you?*

*Come in. If you'd like to take a seat over here...*

*Hello, I'm Dr \_\_\_\_, Dr \_\_\_\_'s registrar....*

### Identifying the reason(s) for the consultation

Identify the patient's problem, listen attentively to patient's opening statement without interruption, confirm the list and screen for further problems, negotiate agenda

### The Opening Question

*How can I help you?*

*Tell me what you have come to see me about.*

*What would you like to talk about today?*

*What can I do for you?*

*How are you doing? (patient's response)... Is that why you have come to see me today?*

*How are things?*

*What's up?*

*Fine, so, off you go...*

*Tell me what problems you have been having.*

*What's on your agenda today?*

*What's brought you here today?*

*What would you like to discuss today?*

*Nothing said (all implied body language)*

## **Follow Up Visit**

**Don't assume you know the reason for the visit.**

*What would you like to discuss today?*

*Am I right in thinking you have come for your routine check-up?*

*Confirm list and screen for further problems*

*So, that's headaches and tiredness, anything else?*

*So, you've been getting headaches and dizziness lately. Has anything else been bothering you?*

*So, you've also been feeling tired and irritable and were wondering if you were anaemic. Anything else at all?*

*So, as I understand it, you've been getting headaches and dizziness but have also been feeling tired, rather irritable and a bit low, and your concern was that you might be anaemic. Did I get that right?*

*I can see these symptoms must have been worrying you and we'll need to explore them further in a minute: first just let me check whether there are any other areas that you hope I might be able to help you with today as well.*

## **Agenda Setting**

*What's the first thing you'd like to discuss?*

*What's the one most troubling you ...?*

*Which one shall we tackle/ focus on first?*

*Which is the one most important to you?*

*Let's start going through them and see where we get to...?  
How shall we take this forward?*

*Shall we start with the new problems...., and then move on to the problems you have been having with your medication?*

*OK, let's think about your headaches and then look at the rash. I wouldn't mind checking your blood pressure and.... later on, if that's alright.*

*That's quite a list for us to get through and I'm not sure we'll have enough time to do it all justice. How about...?*

*I can see that the ... is the thing that is really worrying / bothering you most today, but if you don't mind, I'd rather we started by checking out .....*

### **When Short of Time and Running Late**

*We'll try to deal with as many problems as possible ... depending on time/how we get on...*

*We'll try to do justice to as many as we can.*

*I want to give enough time to each of these problems...*

*Let's get on and see how we go...*

*OK, let's see what we can do today....*