

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....