

Example of GPs script:

Patient contribution

I think it was on my request, wasn't it?

Aside from the letter that I got from the consultant about your medication, was there anything else that you were hoping that we would address today?

Okay, okay. So all linked with the same issues then isn't it. Okay, were there any other issues you were hoping to address today?

So, how's all this impacting on your life?

ICE

Okay, any theories as to what's stopping you from sleeping?

What were you in particular hoping that I would do for you today? I know you wanted some sleeping tablets but...

Anything that was on your mind, anything that was worrying you?

PSO

And you don't smoke?

You live on your own, do you?

Okay, and what's your arrangements at home, do you have a stairlift?

Yeah, okay. And you've got a commode downstairs or a toilet downstairs.

Red flags

Any chest pain at all?

You've never had a heart attack, never had angina?

Could we be missing anything important, aside from that?

Focussed history

Breathless at night?

How many pillows have you got?

Do you ever wake up suddenly feeling really breathless?

And how far can you walk on the flat at the moment?

And I presume you're a bit tired as well.

How far can you walk on the flat?

Do you get lightheaded when you stand up?

Focussed examination

Okay, let me do your blood pressure again if that's okay and check your weight and we'll listen to your lungs.

Would you stand up for me now? Your eyes... don't look anaemic, that's good. Breathe away through your mouth, if you wouldn't mind.

Your blood pressure's not dropping significantly when you stand up, so that's good. Lovely. Take a seat if you wouldn't mind, let me have a look at your neck – going to have a look at the blood vessels in your neck. So, fifty-nine and a half kilos, that's lovely, put yourself back together.

Identify problem

Okay so maybe we need to address that breathlessness on a night and see if that helps.

Okay, but we've now established, with this recent hospital admission, that you've got this problem where your heart leaves fluid on your lungs and your legs, and you retain fluid and that makes you breathless – it also makes your legs puffy too.

Good, well, all of this together suggests that you're retaining a little bit of fluid at the moment, and we could do with helping your heart work a bit more powerfully.

Check understanding

I'm going to give you some information about looking after your sleep pattern, for the time being, but if we get on top of your heart failure then maybe your sleeping will be less of an issue. Anything else that we're missing?

Develops management plan / shares management plan

Can we make a compromise, then? Can we do your- get you to take two of your furosemide in the morning, and then one at lunch time until that puffiness is better?

But, we need to make sure that it's safe. So, why don't we get you to have a blood test while you're here today, get you until next week to take two furosemide in the morning, one at lunchtime – weigh yourself, wee and weigh every day. Maybe you'd be happy us talking on the phone next week with your blood test results, and then I can make some recommendations.

I tell you what, actually, why don't we see each other face-to-face in a week and actually make decisions together.

Safety net and follow up

Maybe you'd be happy us talking on the phone next week with your blood test results, and then I can make some recommendations?

I tell you what, actually, why don't we see each other face-to-face in a week and actually make decisions together?

Now, you keep an eye on that, and if your fluid is getting- if you're gaining two kilos or four pounds or more of weight over a day or two, that's fluid retention until proven otherwise. If you're getting more breathless, that could be your heart failure, so let me know about that.