

# Tool 19 – Assess your consultation skills and style

## Why you should use this tool

It is important to focus on your patient's agenda rather than your own. This exercise helps you as a care professional to analyse your approach in patient consultations and review your achievements.

## When to use this tool

Within or straight after a consultation with a patient.

## What to do

Use the checklist overleaf to review the extent to which you complete the six tasks for individual patients. Start with 10 patients picked at random from several surgeries or clinics (eg one or two per surgery or clinic) and complete the checklist after each session while the consultation is still fresh in your mind. Alternatively, you could review a series of consecutive consultations (eg the first or last five patients from two surgeries or clinics).



**Time:** the minimum time this exercise should take is 60 minutes, allowing a little time for reflection.

## How it works

Doing this exercise should help you to consider the extent to which you keep your determination to support self care among patients in balance with the reasons that the patient is consulting with you.

## What to do next

Invite individuals to debrief as a team and reflect on whether their support for self care is appropriately introduced in the majority of consultations.

For more information on this tool, please click here on [Tool 19](#).

Reference: Tate P. The Doctors Communication Handbook. Oxford: Radcliffe Medical Press; 2001.



Working in Partnership  
Programme

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*self care* • •  
...because health matters •

## Consultation checklist

Check out how comprehensive your approach is in patient consultations and if they include self care support.

Component of consultation	Whether you did this (tick if so)
<b>1. Discover the reason(s) your patient has come to see you</b>	
Elicit the patient's account of the symptom(s) that made him or her consult with you	
Obtain relevant information about the patient's social and occupational circumstances	
Explore your patient's health understanding	
Enquire about other problems	
<b>2. Define the clinical problem(s)</b>	
Obtain additional information about critical symptoms and details of the patient's medical history	
Assess your patient's condition by examination where appropriate	
Make a working diagnosis	
<b>3. Address your patient's problem(s)</b>	
Assess the severity of the presenting problem	
Together with the patient, choose an appropriate form of care	
Involve your patient in the care plan to the appropriate extent	
Try to achieve a shared care plan	
<b>4. Explain the problem(s) to your patient</b>	
Tailor the explanation to the needs of your patient	
Ensure that the explanation is understood and accepted by your patient	
Try to achieve a shared understanding of the problem(s)	
<b>5. Made effective use of the consultation</b>	
Make efficient use of resources	
Establish and maintain an effective relationship with your patient	
Give opportunistic health advice where appropriate	
<b>6. Promote self care</b>	
Discuss future prevention of the condition	
Explain how to wait for resolution of this or future health problems	
Explain how self care can alleviate the condition	
Encourage tolerance of the health condition, as appropriate	