

SHEET 1 Prompt questions for client consultation

Use the following questions as prompts to gain more information about your client's emotional and physical issues. The questions are to be used creatively as a basis for starting an informed conversation with your client, so pick and choose the ones that work best in different situations. For more information on the assessment process and listening skills refer to Chapter 5.

Current complaint

- Why are you here? What is it you need from me today?
- Use the OPQRS mnemonic to draw out more information about the pain condition:
 - **O** (origin): When did it happen? Over time or a sudden event? Was there anything going on for you at that time?
 - **P** (provocation): What makes it better or worse?
 - **Q** (quality): What does the pain feel like? Dull and achy? Tingling? Electrical?
 - **R** (does it radiate): Does the pain radiate or refer anywhere?
 - **S** (where is it exactly): Can you point to the exact place of pain?

Benchmarking

Where do you put the pain today on a scale of 1–10? And what number would you give to the pain during a bad patch?

Medical history

- Have you had any previous accidents or operations? (For example, falling off a horse, car accident or skiing accident.)
- Have you had any previous musculoskeletal problems, e.g. a bad back, headaches or neck pains?
- Have you had any major illnesses? Are you prone to anything? What is your weak spot? For example, chest infections or sinusitis?
- Do you ever get headaches?
- How's your digestion? Any issues with constipation or diarrhoea?
- How are your periods? Any pain?
- Do you sleep OK? Do you wake up feeling refreshed?
- Where would you put your energy levels on a scale of 1–10?
- How was your health when you were growing up?
- How was your parents' health?

Yellow flags

Use the ABCDEF and W mnemonic to ask about psychosocial factors that may be contributing to the pain condition:

- **Attitudes to pain:**
 - Have you had any previous diagnoses about what is going on for you?

Self-care resources

- How do you feel about what the doctor/chiropractor/physiotherapist has said? Does that make sense to you? Do you understand what they have told you?
- What is your general attitude towards your health? Do you feel that you can have a positive affect on your pain condition?
- What do you think is at the root of what is going on for you?
- **Beliefs:**
 - Do you understand about the cause of your pain? What have you been told? Who told you that?
- **Compensation:**
 - Are you involved in any compensation claims about the accident?
 - How long has the claim been going on?
 - How are you feeling about it?
- **Diagnosis:**
 - Have you been given any diagnosis? Who by? How do you feel about that? Does it make sense to you?
- **Emotions and stress levels:**
 - How are your stress levels at the moment?
 - Where would you put your current stress levels on a scale of 1–10?
 - Are the stresses more to do with home or work life?
 - How long do you remember feeling like this?
 - Is there anything that helps you to feel less stressed?
 - Are there any particular triggers to you feeling stressed?
 - Have you had any support around how you feel? Counselling? Is there a close friend or family member you feel able to talk to?
- **Family:**
 - Are you getting any support around your pain?
 - How does your partner feel? Are they supportive?
 - Are you able to talk to anyone, e.g. friends or family, about how you feel?
- **Work:**
 - How do you spend your days?
 - Are you in any regular paid or voluntary work?
 - How many hours do you do a week?
 - Has the pain affected your ability to work?
 - Is the pain better or worse when you are at work? Do you enjoy your job?
 - Do you have time to relax and recharge?
 - How long is your commute?
 - Do you feel supported at work by your boss/colleagues?

Activity and exercise

- How do you spend your days?
- Do you get much chance to move around or do you get stuck at a desk?
- Do you drive or use public transport to get to work or do you walk or cycle?
- Do you have any physical activities you enjoy doing? How often are you able to do them?