

Resource – letters easy read

Look at this hard letter from the doctor. How can we make it easier?

1. Underline the most important bits
2. Circle the hard words
3. Find an easy way of saying some of the hard words.

Feedback

Which bits did you think were the most important?

What hard words did you circle?

We found lots like

Referring

Specialist

Priority

Did you find an easy way of saying any of the hard words?

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Dear Mr Smith

I am referring you to the hospital to see a specialist. If you have any questions regarding your referral or you are not going to be available for the next 2 weeks to attend an appointment please inform me here at your GP surgery.

What happens next?

- ◆ I will refer you to the hospital requesting a priority appointment for you to be seen within 2 weeks. This appointment may include some kind of diagnostic test but you will be sent all the relevant information prior to your appointment.
- ◆ The hospital will contact you by phone with an appointment date.

Please ensure the GP surgery has your correct daytime contact number (including mobile or work numbers) and your current address.

- ◆ Once you have agreed your appointment date you will receive a confirmation letter with details of the appointment and any further information.
- ◆ If the hospital is not able to contact you by telephone, a letter will be sent offering you an appointment date. If the appointment is not convenient please contact the hospital as soon as possible to arrange another appointment, contact details will be given in the letter sent to you.
- ◆ If you do not hear from the hospital within 5 working days, please contact the booking department at the hospital on **0123 456 789**

I understand that this letter may cause you concern but feel this urgent appointment will help identify your future care. If you are unsure about anything in this letter please contact me here at the surgery.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jones
Tel. 0222 222 222

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Dear Mr Smith



You need to go to the hospital to see another doctor.



This doctor will try to find out why you are unwell. You may need to have some tests.



The hospital will call you to tell you when you need to go.



It will be some time in the next 2 weeks.



The hospital will send you a letter with more information.



If you have any questions please call me on 0222 222 222.

Dr Jones

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Notes from the accessibility team at Mencap

The original letter is quite complex.

There are lots of difficult words and the patient is being asked to do a number of things which they may find difficult, particularly if they are worried or distressed.

This version is more accessible as it uses:

- short sentences and large text
- everyday vocabulary
- supporting images
- active language i.e. ‘the hospital will send you’ instead of ‘you will receive’.

In the easy read version some of the information has been left out:

- Firstly, *checking contact details*. This is something the surgery could do at the appointment prior to the referral.
- Secondly, *calling the hospital if you do not hear anything in 5 working days*. Some people may find it difficult to do this. It can also get quite confusing when you include more than one phone number in a letter. The surgery could make reasonable adjustments for people with a learning disability and follow up this letter to make sure an appointment has been scheduled.

Important point!

Lots of people with a learning disability find face-to-face communication easiest. If you can give someone information in person then it may really help. It can also make it easier for them to ask questions and discuss anything that is worrying them.

It is still a good idea to give easy read information as well, as this can help some people remember what was discussed.