



## **Cumbria Advisory Thyroid Service**

### **INFORMATION SHEET**



### **COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR DOCTOR**

Your G.P. is the first person you see or will have seen when you went with your thyroid symptoms. That is the case for those of you who have been diagnosed. Those who have a number of thyroidal symptoms but no results with your blood tests need to keep a line of communication going until a diagnosis is made, even if it turns out to be a different condition, the symptoms still need to be treated.

We all need to return, not only for blood tests on a regular basis, but with ongoing symptoms and maybe related conditions via your thyroid condition.

It is important to rule out any damage done to your body before the diagnosis was made, as is the case with so many others, you find yourself a regular at the surgery.

Alright, so you feel lousy and don't feel able to express yourself correctly. So what is wrong with writing everything down? How about asking a close relative or friend to accompany you to the doctors to testify to the way you have been acting, feeling and suffering?

#### ***REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING RULES:***

- **YOU** have the right to as much information as you want: diagnosis, prognosis, treatment and other recommendations.
- **YOU** have the right to take the time to address your concerns or questions with your doctor – make another appointment if you feel you have had not enough time with this one.
- **YOU** have the right to access your doctor – check the appointment systems and plan in advance.
- **YOU** have the right to make your own decisions – educate yourself about your condition and ask questions and request any other literature available.
- **YOU** have a right to access your medical records – ask at your surgery for the procedure.
- **YOU** have the right to change your doctor – should this become necessary
- **YOU** have the right to a second opinion with another doctor or a specialist

***COMMUNICATION IS A TWO-WAY STREET***

### **Your doctor has the right to:**

- Expect the full facts of your symptoms and condition – your doctor is not a mind reader after all, and the full facts enable a complete diagnosis
- Common courtesy: good manners from his patient, keeping appointments and listening to his suggested advice.
- Ask you questions and not be interrupted when speaking to you. Be ready with your own questions when he/she is finished.
- Expect you to follow the advice given – if you forget to take your medication regularly after the doctor has said it is important that you do not miss taking your pills, the consequences lie with you.
- No harassment – keep your anger and frustrations in check, do not call your doctor out of hours for something that can be easily dealt with in surgery time.
- Enough time to make a diagnosis – allow time for blood tests to come through and other tests to be done before demanding a diagnosis.
- Disagreement: you may disagree, so therefore do not be surprised if your doctor disagrees also.
- State professional conduct – do not ask your doctor to do anything that compromises either his/her position or your position.

*Above all remember you are dealing with another human being, consider their needs and they will consider yours.*

If you do experience problems with your health care providers contact the C.A.T.S office and we will be able to offer alternative contact numbers for advice.

Whilst we are not medical professionals we do encourage you to talk to us, after all only through talking and experiencing each others symptoms and feelings will we become managers of our thyroid conditions.

### **C.A.T.S RECOMMENDS YOU ALWAYS SEEK YOUR DOCTORS ADVICE**

#### **Disclaimer**

*The purpose of this information leaflet is to help those suffering with thyroid disease. Whilst every effort is made to provide accurate information, it is impossible to ensure that the information given is relevant to every individual. No responsibility is accepted by CATS and it is recommended and essential, that if in any doubt about your condition, that you should always contact your doctor, specialist physician or surgeon to seek medical advice.*