

180 • Appendix

ment of Health and Human Services, keeps a list of doctors who have been kicked out of the federal Medicaid or Medicare program because they've been convicted of fraud or patient abuse or have defaulted on their loans. If the feds don't want to use them, you might not want to, either. Google "OIG HHS exclusion searchable database" and you'll go right to the page where you can put in a doctor's name to see if she's on the list.

BLANK "GET IT DUN!" WORKSHEET

When you're in the examining room, make sure you get your business DUN: find out your **diagnosis, understand** the plan to make you better, and learn the **next steps** toward making you feel better. This form is bare-bones, because when you're in the doctor's office, with just minutes to understand what she's saying, you want something very clean and easy to consult. If you've got more time, or a more complicated situation, by all means ask more questions. You can print out more of these blank forms at my website: www.elizabethcohen.com.

D—Diagnosis

1. What's my diagnosis?

U—Understand the Plan to Get Me Better

1. Which drugs should I take, if any?

2. Are there any other treatments or instructions?

3. Do I need a specialist? If so, do you have a specific recommendation?

N—Next Steps

1. How long should I wait for this treatment to work?
2. If my problem doesn't get better in that time, what should I do?
3. Am I awaiting any test results? If so, when are they due back in your office?

**A SAMPLE "GET IT DUN!" CONVERSATION
AND WORKSHEET**

MRS. MOM has brought her baby in to see the pediatrician because the baby is unusually fussy and keeps tugging on her ears. She's a Get It DUN mom, so she has brought in a blank "Get It DUN!" worksheet, and after the conversation you'll see how she fills it out. Remember, D stands for diagnosis, U for understand the plan to get you better, and N for next steps.

DR. DOCTOR: Mrs. Mom, your baby needs to take this antibiotic for an ear infection (handing over prescription). Here you go. See you later.

MRS. MOM: Thank you, Doctor. I have a few questions. So she has an ear infection. Anything else, or is that it?

182 • Appendix

DR. DOCTOR: She may have a urinary-tract infection.

MRS. MOM: Okay, so she has an ear infection and possibly a urinary-tract infection. (Get it DUN—there’s the *D*!) You’re prescribing an antibiotic—should that take care of both problems?

DR. DOCTOR: Yes, that should do it. (Get it DUN—there’s the *U*! Now Mrs. Mom understands the plan to get her baby better.)

MRS. MOM: Okay, so when I leave here I’m going to get the prescription filled. How will I know if it’s working?

DR. DOCTOR: She should feel better in the next forty-eight hours or so.

MRS. MOM: And if she’s not?

DR. DOCTOR: Call me. She might need a different antibiotic.

MRS. MOM: Okay. And what are the next steps regarding the possible urinary-tract infection?

DR. DOCTOR: I took some urine from her today to find out if she has an infection. I should have the results back in two days. We’ll call you, and if she does have one, I may need to prescribe a different antibiotic.

MRS. MOM: Okay, so the immediate plan is she’s taking antibiotics, I should call you in two days if she’s not feeling better, and you’ll be calling me at that time anyway to tell me about the urine-test results. (Get it DUN—there’s the *N*!)

DR. DOCTOR: That’s right.

MOM: Anything else?

DR. DOCTOR: Yes, I think you should put a humidifier in her room.

MRS. MOM: Great. Thanks, Doctor.

MRS. MOM’S FILLED-IN “GET IT DUN!” WORKSHEET

D—Diagnosis

1. What’s my diagnosis?

Ear infection.

U—Understand the Plan to Get Me Better

1. What drugs should I take, if any?
Amoxicillin, six milliliters every morning and evening for ten days.
2. Are there any other treatments or instructions?
Use a humidifier in the room so she can breathe more easily.
3. Do I need a specialist? If so, do you have a specific recommendation?
No.

N—Next Steps

1. How long should I wait for this treatment to work?
Two days.
2. If my problem doesn't get better in that time, what should I do?
Call the doctor—I might need a new antibiotic.
3. Am I awaiting any test results? If so, when are they due back in your office?
The test for urinary-tract infection is due back on Wednesday. Call the doctor at the end of the day on Wednesday if he hasn't called me.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS FOR COMPLICATED PROBLEMS

With a complicated problem, you'll have more success at the doctor's office if you come prepared. Here's a list of questions to ask yourself before your appointment.

184 • Appendix

1. What are my symptoms?

2. When did they begin?

3. What brings on the symptoms?

4. What diagnoses have other doctors given me?

5. In the past, what helped to relieve my symptoms?

6. What didn't help to relieve or get rid of my symptoms?

Questions to ask yourself before a follow-up visit:

7. The treatment recommended at the last visit—has it worked?

8. Has the treatment been causing me any problems?

9. Have I noticed any new symptoms since my last visit?

10. Have I heard of any new treatments that I want to ask my doctor about?
